

IN LUXEMBURG  
IN WAR TIME

FRANCIS GRIBBLE

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IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME







THE GRAND DUCHESS OF LUXEMBURG.



# IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

BY

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## CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	THE FIRST ACTS OF WAR - - -	15
II.	A FAIT ACCOMPLI - - -	25
III.	THE GRAND DUCHESS - - -	38
IV.	GOING ON AS USUAL - - -	47
V.	"SPIES ON THE BRAIN" - -	57
VI.	THE INVADERS' UNPOPULARITY -	69
VII.	PRO-GERMAN RESIDENTS - -	81
VIII.	SOME RED CROSS STORIES - -	91
IX.	THE KAISER—AND MANY RUMOURS -	99
X.	CRIMES OF THE GERMAN ARMY - -	111
XI.	THE FELDWEBEL - - -	126
XII.	CLERICALS AND THE POPE - -	140
XIII.	DISCUSSING THE FUTURE - -	151
XIV.	VILLAGE STREET GOSSIP - -	161
XV.	A CASTLE AND ITS OUBLIETTE - -	174
XVI.	PASSPORTS <i>v.</i> ESCORTS - - -	188

# CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
XVII. THE ESCORT SCORES A WIN - -	197

## APPENDICES—

A. Article II. of the Treaty of London	208
B. Bismarck's Declaration - -	209
C. Convention of the Hague - -	210
D. Telegram from M. Eyschen to the Belgian Foreign Minister -	211
E. Extracts from the " Kolnische Zeitung " - - - -	212
F. Report of Debate in the Reichstag, April 29th, 1913 -	215
G. Extract from German Chancellor's Speech, August 4th, 1914 -	217

## PREFACE

THE full history of the German occupation of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg will doubtless be written, before long, by some one who knows more about it than I had the opportunity of finding out. It will be unpleasant reading for the Germans, though it will not bear the same resemblance to the Newgate Calendar as the faithful chronicle of their proceedings in Belgium, and the north of France. Murder and arson, unless they are yet to come, will not figure in it ; but there will be a dark picture of the arrogance of a bully who found no adequate excuse for brutality. The Germans did not mind being called arrogant in the days when they were prosperous—the use of the epithet then seemed to them a jaundiced tribute to their superiority ; but the unimpeachable demonstration that, at their best, they were underbred intruders in polite circles, will make a very different impression on them, after they have been put in their proper place.

Whether they will then protest against their punishment, or apologise for the shortcomings

## PREFACE

of their character remains to be seen. Most likely they will split up into contentious groups,—each group loudly accusing some other group of having got the country into trouble by its “want of tact.” For tact, strange as it may seem, is a quality in which some Germans do already perceive other Germans to be lacking. The perception dawned upon them when they observed neutral peoples rejoicing over their reverses ; and, Germans being what they are, it is quite likely that Societies for the Cultivation of Tact in Germany will be as numerous in the future as Societies for the Promotion of German Trade or the Preservation of the German Language have been in the past.

Such Societies might, at any rate, find an extensive field of usefulness. Tact, in the past, has existed in Germany—in German political circles, at all events—mainly in the form of low cunning ; and, even in that shape, it has been a failure, thanks to the spiritual pride of certain German crusaders, whose ambitions outran the hypocrisy of the statesmen, and impelled them to boast before putting their harness on. They felt, perhaps, that national crimes could only be justified by a national system of philosophy. So they worked out a suitable philosophy, and preached it, thereby, as it were, raising to the rank of prophet the Oxford Don who, long ago, looked forward to the day when we should see

## PREFACE

“ all the German philosophies at the bottom of the German Ocean.”

They have had to pick and choose, even among their own philosophers, in order to do so ; and the greatest of those whom they have had to throw overboard, is no less a philosopher than Kant. He, unfortunately for them, worked out the political conclusions of his own metaphysics ; and his precepts represent the principles, not of Germany, but of Germany's enemies. These are his words :—

“ One must not, in war, permit oneself to engage in hostilities of such a kind as are calculated to make mutual confidence impossible when the question of peace is broached. Even in war there must remain a kind of confidence in the enemy's principles. Otherwise peace could never be concluded, and the hostilities would degenerate into a veritable war *à outrance* ; whereas war is, in reality, only a melancholy resource, imposed upon us by nature for the defence of our rights,—force taking the place of a judicial tribunal. War *à outrance*, implying the annihilation of right of every kind, would only permit the conclusion of perpetual peace in the vast cemetery of the human race. Such a war, and everything which leads to it, is, therefore, absolutely illicit. And there are certain means which lead so well to such an end that their infamous devices, already condemnable in themselves, do not cease, when

## PREFACE

once they have been introduced, until long after the war is over. Such means are, for instance, the use of spies, assassination, poisoning, and the diffusion of lies."

German philosophy of that sort could be, it is clear, of no use whatever to the German General Staff. In order that the War Book, and the policy inaugurated by Frederick the Great and developed by Bismarck and Bethmann-Hollweg, might rest upon a philosophical basis, Kant had to be "scrapped," and a fresh start made with Hegel and Fichte. Whether the premises of these thinkers really support the conclusions of their disciples is too large and difficult a question to be debated here. One need only say that, if they do, so much the worse for the premises; for the conclusions are such that, rather than argue with those who hold them, one would knock their heads together until they recanted.

Those conclusions are, roughly speaking, as follows :—

The Germans are the salt of the earth. Being the salt of the earth, the Germans are entitled to go anywhere and take anything. Their power to take whatever they want is at once the basis of their title to it and the proof that they are the salt of the earth. The fact that they are bound by Treaties not to take it is an entirely irrelevant consideration; for there is no reason why Treaties should be observed by those who feel



## PREFACE

strong enough to break them with impunity. The territories which it is desirable for Germany to annex in defiance of Treaty obligations are, etc., etc.

No political programme could be more shamelessly cynical ; and there is no item in the programme which has not been endorsed by some distinguished leader of German thought. One finds, perhaps, the best collection of aphorisms on the subject in Professor Lasson's work on " War and the Idea of Kultur."

" Whether Treaties should be observed is not a question of right ; it is a question of interest."

" The State which realises the highest form of Kultur can only establish itself on a proper basis by the destruction of other States ; and that, logic requires one to add, can only be accomplished by violence."

" The right of interference in other people's affairs is only limited by other people's power to prevent that interference. If success is assured, interference is not only justified but becomes a part of the State's duty towards itself."

" The weak like to place their trust in the inviolability of the Treaties which assure them their miserable existence. War exists for the very purpose of demonstrating that a Treaty may have been bad, and that circumstances may have changed. There is only one guarantee : a sufficient military force."

## PREFACE

“To allow a people to decide whether they will belong to one State or another would be like allowing the children of a household to look round and choose a father.”

Those sentiments were expressed in 1868. They have subsequently been endorsed by the greater authority of Treitschke, who preached immorality in political relations from a professorial chair in Berlin, and disposed of Treaty obligations and guarantees of neutrality in two short sharp sentences :—

“A State cannot bind itself for the future in its relations with other States.”

“If a State is not in a position to defend its neutrality, it is absurd to speak of that neutrality.”

So much for the abstract propositions. The utterances of other Professors show that they are meant to have a concrete application :

“Germany means to stand alone. The Germans are the chosen people. They will accomplish their destiny, which is to govern the world, and direct the other nations for the advantage of humanity.”

So wrote Professor von Seyden in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* ; while a writer in the *Post* is even more precise in his menaces :

“If the necessary extension of territory is denied to us, we shall be obliged to draw the sword, and then,—Woe betide the vanquished.”

All this is in the style of the Prussian lieutenant

## PREFACE

hustling civilians off the pavement in the streets of Berlin ; but though, in these utterances, the programme of expansion is vague and uncertain, one can quote many other utterances which are definite and detailed. A contributor to *Die Zukunft* tells us that "the teaching of history is that the white race, under the guidance of Germany, is destined to arrive at the final and effective domination of the world" ; and Daniel Frymann indicates the means by which the goal is to be reached :

"The fratricidal war of 1866 was necessary to the foundation of the German Empire. How can we hope to obtain recognition of our place in the world without fighting our English cousins ? As regards Belgium and Holland, these insignificant States, have, by reason of their insignificance, forfeited their right to exist ; for no State has a right to independence unless it can defend that independence, sword in hand."

How Germany proposed to arrange matters when she had attained her goal, we gather from the author of a treatise on political philosophy entitled "Greater Germany and Central Europe in 1950" :

"There will then be two territorial groups. The one will be a political group—a German Federation embracing the German Empire, Luxemburg, Belgium, Holland, German Switzerland, Austro-Hungary. The other will be a vast Zollverein,

## PREFACE

including, besides the Confederation, the Baltic Provinces, the Kingdom of Poland, the Ruthenian Country, Rumania, and Greater Serbia. Then the Germans will feel, as they did in the Middle Ages, that they are a people of masters."

It is a doctrine for which we can find the sanction of a greater name. The works of Clausewitz may almost be called the Holy Scriptures of the Prussian Army ; and this is the scheme of annexation which Clausewitz sketches for it :

"In order that there may be no mistake about it, we proclaim, here and now, that our continental nation is entitled to have access to the sea ; not only to the North Sea, but also to the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. We shall, therefore, absorb, one after the other, all the provinces adjoining Prussia. We shall annex successively Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Franche-Comté, the North of Switzerland, Livonia ; then Trieste and Venice ; finally the North of France, from the Somme to the Loire."

And the programme of Clausewitz is also the programme of General Bronsart von Schellendorf, sometime Prussian Minister of War.

"The next war will be something frightful. Between Germany and France there can only be a duel to the death. 'To be or not to be' will be the question posed ; and that question can only be resolved by the ruin of one of the two antagonists . . .

## PREFACE

. . . " We shall annex Denmark, Belgium, Holland, Livonia, Trieste and Venice, and the North of France from the Somme to the Loire. This programme, which we expound fearlessly, is not the work of a madman ; the empire which we wish to found is not an Utopia. We have the means to realise it."

The programme could, of course, only be realised by a cynical violation of treaties ; but the men who unfolded that programme were responsible statesmen. We may take it, therefore, as proved, that the Germans who sign treaties, sign them with their tongues in their cheeks, and with the deliberate intention of dishonouring their signatures at the first convenient opportunity. Honour, in short, is nothing to them. There is a Higher Law : that the barbarian, simply because he is a barbarian, is entitled to devastate the world, in the name of Kultur, which is only another name for Barbarism. For, as we read in the *Neue Rundschau* :

" Kultur is a spiritual organisation of the world which does not exclude 'bloody savagery.' It makes the devilish sublime. It is above morality, above reason, above science."

The occupation of Luxemburg was the first step in that damnable direction. If it was accomplished without bloody violence, that was only because the task seemed easy. Even a savage does not reach out his hand with bloody violence

## PREFACE

to pluck ripe fruit ; and it really looked as if this fruit were ripe for the plucking. But the Luxemburgers were not conciliated because the invaders refrained from massacre. An unofficial attempt to raise a corps of Luxemburg volunteers for the German army was an abject failure. Many Luxemburgers have volunteered to fight for France ;\* but it is said that not a single one has volunteered to fight for Germany.

That fact would suffice to show any one who doubted on which side the sympathies of the Luxemburgers lie ; to any one who has lived among them, even for a few months, the proof is superfluous. Indications of their loathing of Germans crop up in every talk with every stranger ; the well-grounded reasons for that loathing will be apparent to every one who reads this book.

\* About 800 volunteered, and 541 were actually enrolled.

## CHAPTER I

### THE FIRST ACTS OF WAR

THE place from which I witnessed the first acts of war was Vianden, in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg.

It is a village, dominated by the ruins of a mediæval castle, in the dark recesses of which the ghosts of mediæval knights are reputed to gamble with the Devil for their souls; the custodian told me, when I took tea there, that she herself had often heard the rattling of the dice. One gets to the village by steam tram from Diekirch, on the Prince Henri line, and one feels as if one had got to the end of the world. One could not imagine a more peaceful place, or desire a more peaceable population.

Victor Hugo was there for a few weeks, with Jeanne, and Georges, and Juliette Drouet, in the early days of the war of 1870; and the house, close to the bridge, from the window of which he exhibited himself to the inhabitants, is indicated by a memorial slab. It is said that the villagers used to gather on the bridge, and stare at him while he composed works of genius at an open window, and that he used to rise and bow

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

his acknowledgments from time to time. They also tell how he helped to extinguish a fire at a neighbouring farm-house, taking his place manfully in the row of peasants who passed the buckets, and repulsing, with noble words and gestures, those who suggested that he was too old for such a strenuous task.

“No, no,” he said, with a magnificent wave of the hand. “It becomes a great man to set a great example.”

It was my friend René Engelmann, teacher of English and French at the Diekirch High School, who told me that story. Many of the other stories which I shall relate in these pages came from him, in the days when we sat together in beer gardens, or walked on the banks of the river. He was the last citizen of Luxemburg who shook hands with me, at a time when I was one of four prisoners, watched by a bearded, but unusually shy, German sergeant who, embarrassed by the presence of ladies, did not seem quite to know whether he was with us as a guard or as a body servant. His lot, at that time, seemed much more fortunate than mine; but some months later, at Ruhleben, I read in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, of his tragic death, by his own hands: a mystery of the war about which I shall not know the truth until the war is over.

But that is a digression. I must return to myself and my own fortunes.



## THE FIRST ACTS OF WAR

At the time when the war-clouds were gathering I fell ill, and had to go to bed. When the clouds burst, I was convalescent, but not yet quite well. Our luggage was packed, and we were on the point of starting when we discovered that it was too late to start ; that the Germans had entered, like thieves in the night, and seized the railways. It was possible that an Englishman might still get through to Belgium, shedding his baggage on the frontier ; but it was equally possible that an Englishman who tried to do so would be arrested and called upon to prove that he was not a spy. The choice, in fact, was between the devil one knew and the devil one didn't know. Wisely, or unwisely, I preferred the former ; and that is how I came to hear a good deal more than is generally known in England about the proceedings of the Germans in the Grand Duchy.

✓ The Luxemburgers themselves, I had already discovered, had no illusions as to what was about to happen,—no touching faith in the plighted word of a King of Prussia, and no mistaken confidence in the value of scraps of paper bearing his signature. They knew that the Kaiser's grandfather (or his Chancellor, speaking on his behalf) had threatened to tear up the scrap of paper which guaranteed their neutrality, in 1870—only three years after he had signed it—and they had no reason to believe that William II.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

was a more honourable man than William I., or Bethmann-Hollweg more scrupulous than Bismarck.

“Of course they will violate our neutrality,” they said. “They mean to,—they have always meant to. What else is the purpose of the Prince Henri line, which is under Prussian management?”

And yet, when it came to the point, they were surprised—things happening a great deal faster than they had expected.

They are a loveable and leisurely race, given over to the cultivation of roses; and what should a rose-grower know of hustling, and of the lightning-like celerity of an *attaque brusquée*? The Luxemburgers certainly knew nothing whatever of such things. Those of them who thought the matter out at all thought it out as follows: So much time will be needed for mobilisation; so much for concentration; and then, no doubt, our Government will be given so many days in which to decide whether it will allow the passage of German troops through its territory. While they were thus turning the matter over in their minds, there came the thunder-clap.

It came on the Sunday morning, though there had already been certain preliminary rumblings.

First of all came the proclamation of the *Kriegsgefahrzustand*, and the closing of the frontier,

## THE FIRST ACTS OF WAR

of which I was myself a witness, even treading German soil for a few minutes after it had been proclaimed, at Roth, the frontier village, which is less than a mile distant from Vianden.

As we were in the heart of the country, however, there was really little to be seen. A few children were singing *Heil dir im Siegeskranz* on their way home from school, and showed no resentment when they were told they were singing it out of tune. A few peasants were standing by the roadside in devotional attitudes, singing *Die Wacht am Rhein* ; but there was no danger from them. They hardly understood as yet what the excitement was about ; and those who were soon to be denounced to them as their bitterest enemies still appeared to them as distinguished strangers whom they liked to caress their goats and pat their children on the head. The first serious symptom was the glittering helmet of a very fat gendarme, whom we saw toiling laboriously up the hill towards us on a bicycle ; it seemed discreet to retire towards the frontier as he approached. Presently he drew near, and gave us a significant look, which was possibly intended as a good-natured warning. Interpreting it as such, we walked a few yards, and so reached neutral ground ; whereupon the gendarme gravely got off his bicycle and, with equal gravity, fastened a steel chain across the road between him and us.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

That was the formal closing of the frontier, which was presently to be re-opened so dramatically, —a ceremony performed in the course of that afternoon, on all the roads entering the Grand Duchy from Prussia. A party of tourists who had started, in the morning, in a motor waggonette, for a circular trip in the Eiffel, had difficulties on their return. Their car was detained at the frontier, and they had to complete their journey on foot. One of them, who was rash enough to admire the landscape through his binoculars, believed that he would have been thrown into prison if he had not slipped pieces of silver into the palm of the non-commissioned officer.

Next day the exodus began in earnest ; some of the residents being in an even greater hurry to get away than the tourists. One exodus of which we heard was that from the famous Hotel Brasseur, whence, it appeared, the cooks had departed to fight for France, the waiters to fight for Germany, and the proprietor's son to fight for Belgium. The boy's father, we heard, had stringently forbidden him to go. He was an only child, his only brother having recently died, in a tragic manner, of heart failure, while running a race at the school sports ; he was four years under the military age. But he had heard the call and meant to answer it, whatever his father said. His bedroom was empty, one morning, and a pencilled note explained where he had gone, and why.

## THE FIRST ACTS OF WAR

Some day, I hope, he will come back, decorated, and his father will be proud of him.

Another who vanished into Belgium at the same time, was our station-master. His wife, a Luxembourgoise, heard that he had reached Namur, and then heard nothing. She wandered about, beseeching every one for news, and talking as people are apt to talk who have always lived in peaceful places, and do not understand the meaning of a sudden call to arms. She even seemed to think that she ought to apologise for his inconsiderate precipitation in leaving her. "Of course," she said, "he didn't know it was so serious; otherwise he would have stayed here with me"; which shows, perhaps, that an atmosphere of rose-growing neutrality lacks some of the qualities needed to fortify the human mind.

A Sandhurst cadet who was staying in our hotel, also hurried away, on the chance that England would be involved; he got through by the last train, and has, no doubt, long since obtained his commission. Our wealthiest resident locked up his house in a hurry, and motored off, announcing his intention of taking refuge at—Brussels; his cousin afterwards took me into the house and regaled me on the excellent strong beer which he had left behind. Who else went I hardly remember, nor does it matter; but the last of them had hardly taken his place

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

in the steam-tram when the sensational news burst upon us.

Already, on the Saturday night, sensational rumours had been circulating to the effect that a Prussian detachment had entered the Grand Duchy somewhere further to the North, but they had not been verified, and it had not been thought necessary to alarm the guests by repeating them. Now came the still more sensational certainty.

It must have been about ten o'clock in the morning. I was on the hotel verandah, lounging in a deck chair. The packing was nearly finished, and we were meaning to leave on the Monday. But then, of a sudden, the member of Parliament for Vianden came running up the street towards us, hatless, almost breathless, and shouting, at the top of his voice, in French :

*" Les Prussiens sont à la gare de Luxembourg ! "*

He gave no details, but ran on, carrying the news all through the village. A few minutes later came a second messenger, also hatless and breathless, carrying a supplementary message :

*" Les Prussiens sont à la gare de Diekirch ! "*

And Diekirch is only seven miles from Vianden. We, too, might see the Prussians at any moment, if they thought it worth while to visit a place off the beaten track, on a road which led nowhere in particular ; and they did think it worth while, though not immediately. It seemed to be their plan to spin themselves all over the Grand Duchy

## THE FIRST ACTS OF WAR

like a spider's web. They arrived at the dead of night—or perhaps it was in the small hours of the morning—and when we came down to breakfast on Monday, we found German soldiers mounting guard over the little bridge across the Our.

They were *Landwehr* men from villages in the neighbourhood ; many of them had friends, and even relatives, in Vianden. Consequently, there was no outburst of ill-feeling,—no flinging about of that word “ pig-dog ” with which the Prussian normally announces his uninvited arrival among strangers. For the moment the impression was pretty much as though an invading army entering Ventnor turned out to be commanded by the Mayor of Shanklin, and to include the Shanklin butchers and bakers, plumbers, painters, paper-hangers, and glaziers. Signs of recognition, and even friendly greetings, were frequent.

“ Poor fellows ! ” exclaimed one good woman “ They look as if they'd been marching all night. I really must make them a good hot bowl of soup.”

And no doubt they needed the soup, and were glad of it, for they certainly had been fetched from their homes in a hurry, without regard to their breakfast hours or their previous engagements. Those of them who reached the depot late had not even been put into uniforms ; except for their forage-caps, they were still in mufti, with white badges stitched to their coat-sleeves. When the

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

Prussians themselves catch prisoners so imperfectly attired, they call them franc-tireurs and shoot them ; but if they are told that what is sauce for the goose may also be sauce for the gander, they invoke the Higher Law.

As yet, however, they have no need to invoke it. The Vianden villagers knew nothing about the War Book, or the Conventions of Geneva and The Hague. If they missed the uniforms, it was only because their absence spoiled the spectacular effect of the invasion ; and their feeling towards Prussians in general—about which I shall have a good deal to say presently—did not inspire them with any perceptible animus against those particular Prussians. Those who felt deeply said nothing ; the other appeared to take a mild pleasure in the excitement. The children in particular, not being used to soldiers, gathered round them in an admiring ring, and seemed to be having the time of their lives ; while the soldiers, on their part, enjoyed the admiration far too much to drive their admirers away as “ pig-dogs.”

That is how Vianden came to be occupied without friction. Now I must turn back and tell the story of the occupation of Luxemburg.



## CHAPTER II

### A FAIT ACCOMPLI

WHAT had happened ?

That was what we all had been wanting to know ever since our Member of Parliament had run up the street, shouting his sensational news ; and it did not take us very long to find out. Refugees from Luxemburg, frightened away by the tumult of the invasion, came and told us the details, as soon as the line was re-opened for local traffic. They were mostly women, with an air of fluttered birds, scared out of their nests. Their talk was as rapid as the twittering of birds, though louder. It was not, at first, very easy to disentangle sober statements of fact from indignant expressions of opinion ; but the story which they told was one which we had many subsequent opportunities of checking, and it supplements, and in some respects conflicts with, the story given in popular histories of the war.

Our Saturday night rumour, it seemed, had been substantially correct. The invaders had first appeared at the place called in French, Trois Vierges and in German Ulflingen. They had torn up a portion of the railway line, entered

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

the railway station, and demanded the instant surrender of the telegraphic apparatus. The Luxemburg operator had picked up whatever part of it was moveable, and hurled it at either the head or the feet of the officer who asked for it. It is said that he was forgiven,—the fact that he missed his mark being taken into account as an extenuating circumstance ; but the launching of this unusual projectile was, at any rate, the first act of war. It was followed by the withdrawal of the Prussian force which had apparently mistaken its instructions, and acted prematurely. The real invasion, directed at the capital, was delayed until the small hours of the Sunday morning.

There was no formality about it—no pretence of asking leave—no presentation of an ultimatum ; and that, of course, is characteristic of Prussian arrogance. With Belgium it was worth while to proceed diplomatically, because Belgium could not be rushed and might conceivably be cajoled or frightened into standing aside. In the case of Luxemburg, it was not worth while. The Luxemburg Army consisted only of a Palace Guard and a military band. It could no more withstand the Prussian army than a kitten could hold a staircase against a pack of hounds. Why bother to be ceremonious with such a helpless crew ? It would suffice to confront them with a *fait accompli* for breakfast.

## A FAIT ACCOMPLI

That, so far as one can read the Prussian mind, seems to have been the argument ; but things did not happen quite on the projected lines.

Somebody telephoned from Wasserbillig ; presumably other people telephoned from other stations. At all events it became known, in the course of the night, that the " special train from Trier " for the reception of which the Luxemburg stationmaster had been asked to make arrangements was in fact an armoured train full of Prussian soldiers, and that a further stream of Prussian soldiers in motors, on motor cycles, and on bicycles, was pouring along the high road to the capital in the dark. Luxemburg had got its warning, and had to make up its mind in a hurry how to act ; and that is where I find the histories of the war diverging from the story told on the spot.

" The Grand Duchess," I find Mr. Buchan writing, " motored up and wheeled her car across the roadway, but she was bidden to go home, and her chauffeur was compelled to turn. One of the Ministers of State made a formal protest, but it was greeted with laughter."

That is well invented,—though not, of course, invented by Mr. Buchan ; but I do not think that it is true. Things happened so suddenly that the Grand Duchess would hardly have had time to dress for this dramatic remonstrance ; and the Ministers of State only drafted the protest, which

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

was actually presented by two of their officers—one of them being commissioned to meet the motorists, and the other to meet the train.

They were received in the manner in which, knowing the Prussians, they had expected to be received. The Prussians, in the eyes of the Luxemburgers, are, at the best, underbred *parvenus* given to forcing their way into circles in which their company is not desired; and their behaviour on this occasion fully justified that estimate of them. The Luxemburg officer who met the Prussian motorists was not even given a chance of reading his protest. A revolver was pointed at his head and he was told to get out of the way, or it would be the worse for him. The protest of the Luxemburg officer who met the train was ignored with every circumstance of insolence. The Prussian officer who got out of the train did not even return his salute, but waved him away, saying that he had no time to listen to him, and left him reading, while he proceeded to his immediate task of taking possession of the Post Office.

To get there, he had to cross the famous Pont Adolf, spanning a deep gorge, and it was on that bridge that the Luxemburgers, by way of further protest, had erected their one and only barricade. The English legend has it that there again the Grand Duchess was encountered in her motor; but the actual barricade, if less distinguished, was

## A FAIT ACCOMPLI

more picturesque. It consisted of a prison van of the sort known in France as *panier-à-salade*, and in England as "Black Maria," drawn across the road, with a gendarme standing at each end of it.

It was stationed there, however, only as a demonstration, and not with any view of offering resistance. The gendarmes, in fact, being able-bodied men, made themselves useful in removing the "Black Maria" when the Prussians complained of it as an obstruction to the traffic. They could do nothing else. As for defying the Prussians—as well might a Canadian canoe have defied the High Canal Fleet before the Battle of Jutland. So there was merely a little brisk dialogue,—a reference, on the one side to the rights of neutrals, and, on the other, to the Kaiser's orders; and then the van was driven back to its garage, and the invaders did what seemed good to them without further hindrance.

That was the time when the air began to be thick with telegrams, and the walls to be covered with proclamations. The Grand Duchess telegraphed to the Kaiser, pretending to believe that he was a gentleman and a man of honour, whom evil counsellors had momentarily lured into devious courses. M. Eyschen, the Prime Minister, telegraphed to the various guarantors of Luxemburg neutrality. I need not pad my pages with these despatches, for newspaper readers

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

are already familiar with them. As for the proclamations,—one of those which M. Eyschen issued struck me as particularly pathetic. It admitted that the Treasury was nearly empty, and implored all patriotic citizens who had a little money in hand to pay their taxes before they were due, and so avert national insolvency.

The invaders, on their part, issued two proclamations, of which the second gave the lie to the first, while the first conflicted with the facts. First, they gave out that they only had entered the Grand Duchy in order to protect railways built with German capital from the French who were preparing to attack them ; whereas the French were making no preparations of the kind, and the only damage which the lines had suffered had been done by the Germans themselves at Trois Vierges. Then, as their high-handed proceedings were seen to be glaringly inconsistent with this modest announcement, they added that circumstances had compelled them to proceed to the military occupation of the Grand Duchy. Finally, they promised that full compensation should be given for all damage which they found it necessary to do, and that all goods requisitioned should be paid for in cash ; and that undertaking was endorsed by the Chancellor himself in one of those “ blazing indiscretions ” which periodically adorn his public utterances.

Every one knows the speech. The Chancellor

## A FAIT ACCOMPLI

admitted that Germany had done Luxemburg "a wrong"; he said that he used the word "advisedly"; but he added that the wrong should be "made good to the last farthing."

It is a pledge to which he must, of course, be pinned; no excuse for evading it can be allowed to serve. If he cannot fulfil it, now that the bills which Germany has run up are so much longer than he expected, without stripping his own coat from his back, off the coat must go, and he must make the best of things in his shirt sleeves. The idea is not to be tolerated that, in the years to come, he or his Kaiser, or Tirpitz the baby-killer, or Von Bissing, or von Falkenhayn, or von Jagow, or any other responsible German, should be allowed more than one suit of clothes or more than one meal a day, as long as this particular bill remains unsettled. And the suit, when it comes to the point, should be a shabby one, and the meal a poor one.

So some of my Luxemburg friends used to argue; and I encouraged them, promising them that one Englishman, at least, would support their view of the matter with all possible emphasis if he got home safely. I promised the more readily because I saw signs that the Germans were trying to wriggle out of their pecuniary engagements almost as soon as they had entered into them.

"Have they been paying cash?" I one day asked one of my friends.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

“ It is computed,” he told me, “ that they have paid cash for about one-third of what they have taken. For another third they have given receipts entitling the bearer to future payment, at some date not specified. The remaining third has simply been confiscated without acknowledgment.”

I suspect, too, that there often was trickery about the receipts. In Belgium, there was a case of a peasant, ignorant of the German language, who, under pressure, yielded up four horses, and discovered, when he presented his *bon*, that he had been given a receipt for “ four rabbits.” Practical jokes of that order may perfectly well have been perpetrated in the Grand Duchy too. The spirit inspiring them was certainly apparent in the leading article in which the *Frankfurter Zeitung* discussed the demand for a payment on account of the indemnity. The trade of Luxemburg, said that great oracle of commerce and finance, had profited immensely from the presence of so many German soldiers in the country. Justice required, therefore, that the compensation should be small. The extravagant pretensions of the Luxemburgers must be treated with the contempt which they deserved.

This at a time when the Prime Minister was imploring the citizens to pay their taxes in advance, as the only means whereby a financial crisis could be avoided ! Can one imagine anything more Prussian ?



## A FAIT ACCOMPLI

For the damage done was real—the “moral and intellectual” damage no less real than the material; and the Prussians set about doing it deliberately as soon as they had forced the barricade of which I have spoken on the Pont Adolf. Naturally, I am not in a position to draft the full account; but I can at least indicate some of the items.

The first step was, of course, to “annihilate,” in a military sense, the little Luxemburg army. That object was achieved by locking the soldiers up in their own barracks; and it is hardly to be denied that every one of them is entitled to such compensation as a civil court would be likely to award for illegal imprisonment. It would not be a bad idea for the forthcoming Treaty of Peace to make the payment of that compensation a first charge on the stipends of the General Staff.

The next step was to place Luxemburg in a state of defence; and as the old fortifications of the Gibraltar of Europe had been dismantled in 1867, new ones had to be improvised. They were constructed without regard to the rights of either public or private property. The axe was laid at the root of the trees in the beautiful avenues which embellish the Luxemburg suburbs, on the ground that they might obstruct the fire of German guns. The fruit trees in the orchards of the market gardeners were felled with as little ceremony. Emplacements for guns

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

were ruthlessly dug in potato plots and strawberry beds. Fatigue parties were set to work at these tasks as soon as the occupation was effective.

Then the arrests began ; and that, too, was a characteristically Prussian proceeding.

“ Preventive arrest ” is one of the many Prussian devices for bouncing the civilised world into docile submission to barbarians. Their Secret Service compiled, in time of peace, long lists of persons who must be arrested as soon as war broke out—not only in Germany, but in any hostile or neutral town which German troops might enter. There were, I was told, four hundred names on the Metz list alone ; and though I do not know how many names were on the Luxemburg list, I do know that such a list existed. There were, in fact, two lists: a list of persons to be arrested at once, and a further list of persons to be watched, and arrested if their movements gave grounds for suspicion. The latter was shown, in confidence, to a friend of mine whose name was on it ; the former list received immediate attention.

From a certain point of view, indeed,—I mean of course, their own—the behaviour of the Prussians in the capital was “ correct.” They did not burn, or loot, or ravish. But they did, on the very morning of their arrival, climb Luxemburg staircases, knock at Luxemburg doors, seize Luxemburg citizens, in spite of the Prime

## A FAIT ACCOMPLI

Minister's protest, and carry them off to a German prison at Trier.

Not a single one of the men thus dragged from their homes was ever convicted of any offence. Few, if any of them, were ever called upon to meet any specific charge. I believe, though I cannot be positive, that all of them were eventually released. But, in the meantime, they were all treated badly. I met one of them, after his release, when he passed through Vianden on business, and had the opportunity of questioning him.

"They made a show of me," he said. "The people who saw me thought I was a spy; and a mob followed me through the streets of Trier shouting for my blood. It was really a relief when the prison door closed on me. But, in the prison, they treated me, not as a political suspect, but as a convicted criminal. They put me in the prison clothes; they fed me on the prison fare; they made me clean my cell."

He asked me to let people in England know about it; and I promised him that I would not forget. I was the less likely to forget, and the more certain to insist because, as I learnt many months afterwards, the same treatment was meted out to various Englishmen, equally innocent, on German soil. It struck me as odd then, —and it still strikes me as odd—that the Prussians, doing such things, should be indignant, or even surprised, when civilised people call them

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

barbarians. The only plausible defence surely would be that they never set up for being anything but barbarians. Anyhow, they have run up, in this connection, a long bill, which they must be required to pay in full ; and the bill must be the longer because the things began to happen before war had been declared.

At Vianden, indeed, we did not know, for a good many days, whether it was a case of war, or only of preparations for a war which the efforts of the diplomatists might, after all, avert ; and I well remember the day on which a staff officer told us the truth.

He was a fat little man, with a proud and distant manner, and enormous goggles, who had been inspecting the posts guarding the bridges up and down the Our. His motor stopped outside the hotel, and he came into the garden and called for beer and a cigar. He insisted, with ferocious emphasis, that the cigar must be a good one—no ordinary cigar would do. It seemed as if it would be as much as any one's life was worth to speak to him on any subject except beer and cigars ; but our landlady took the risk, standing beside him, with her hands folded across her apron while he imbibed, and telling him of the hopes of a peaceful settlement which still lingered in our minds.

It was if as dark lightning flashed at her through his goggles.

## A FAIT ACCOMPLI

“ *Nein, es ist los,*” he said with a savage glare ; and then he emptied his glass to the greater glory of Prussian arms, put the money down without a word, signalled to the chauffeur, and disappeared without even a “ good afternoon.”

That is how we first knew for certain where we were, and what we were in for ; and we waited, more or less patiently, to see what would happen next. But nothing happened for the moment except that, every now and again, a soldier flashed by on a bicycle ; and so we fell to talking about the Grand Duchess, and her sorrows, and the spirit in which she was taking them.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE GRAND DUCHESS

POOR little Grand Duchess! She must have a chapter to herself, though it will have to be a short one, as there is little to be said, while there are points on which it is not possible to speak as positively as one would like to.

We only saw her once, and that was in the days when it still looked as though all were for the best in the best of all possible Grand Duchies. There was a village *fête* at Vianden, and she motored over to show herself to those whom one assumed to be her loyal subjects.

It was impossible not to admire. She bore, without a trace of self-consciousness, her blushing honours as the most beautiful princess in Europe, sitting serenely, with her beautiful sisters and her chaperon, in the little band-stand on the village square—the said band-stand having been carpeted in her honour, and equipped with a gorgeous drawing-room suite, fetched out expressly from the village upholsterer's shop. We saw our middle-aged burgomaster, attired in his Sunday best, blushing like an embarrassed turkey-cock while reading his address of welcome ;

## THE GRAND DUCHESS

but it seemed that she spoke gracious words which set him at his ease. She had words and smiles not less gracious for the members of the village Gymnastic Society, who turned remarkable somersaults in her honour, and for the village maidens who handed bouquets to her, and for the village musicians, who rendered the Luxemburg national anthem, with its proud refrain :

*We want to remain what we are !*

That was the traditional answer of the Luxemburgers to all proposals for merging them in some large political unity. They did not want to be French, or German, or even Belgian; they wanted to remain what they were. Many of them, in the course of the tragic time we lived through together, asked me, with pathetic eagerness, whether I thought that they would still be allowed to do so; but, on that day of festivities, the question had not yet been raised, and none of us guessed that it was going to be raised. It seemed then—to the stranger at all events—a matter of course that the Luxemburgers would always remain what they were, and that the grand Duchess would enjoy a long, untroubled reign over a devoted people. One heard the tourists of many countries, not excluding Germany, mingling sentiments of this sort with their admiration.

“ She’s fortunate, isn’t she ? ”

“ As fortunate as she is beautiful.”

“ She, at least, has no enemies. There is no

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

fear that her fate will be that of Francis Ferdinand."

"No, she will just wait for Prince Charming, and then marry and live happily ever afterwards like a Princess in a fairy tale."

At the same time, while strangers talked thus, I did not observe that enthusiasm among the villagers which I should have expected. The little girls, no doubt, were delighted at the opportunity of making themselves important ; but the reception, on the whole, struck me as cold. I said as much to some of my Luxemburg friends, and they explained.

"Oh, yes, she's very pretty—very pretty, indeed ; but she isn't really popular. We've nothing against her—nothing definite, that is to say ; but, you see, she's too fond of Prussians."

And then followed criticism of the Prussians.

"They wriggle in everywhere, those Prussians. It was different in the time when the King of Holland was Grand Duke ; now there are far too many Prussians hanging about the Court. I'm very much afraid the Grand Duchess will end by marrying a Prussian."

They always said "Prussian," be it observed, and never "German." Nowhere in Europe is the line of demarcation between Prussians and other Germans more sharply drawn than in Luxemburg ; and the feeling that the Grand Duchess was too fond of Prussians was certainly a genuine one.



## THE GRAND DUCHESS

Recent events ought to have dissipated it ; but when I read in the papers of a “ boycott ” of the Grand Duchess which makes it difficult for her to form a ministry, I have my doubts. In any case the reasons why it was not unnatural that the Grand Duchess should be too fond of Prussians are fairly obvious.

Family connections have doubtless had something to do with the matter ; and the trouble may also have arisen in part out of the difficulty of running hereditary monarchy and democracy in double harness in a country in which there is no hereditary aristocracy to bridge the gulf between the two. The Luxemburgers are, in the main, as delightfully simple democrats as the Swiss. I have seen one of their most distinguished cabinet ministers walk unattended into an inn, greet the inn-keeper as an old friend, and crack a bottle with him in the café, on terms of the most affable equality. I felt that that was as it should be—that the greatest happiness of the greatest number profited by such simplicity of manners. But I also know it to be a simplicity to which royal personages do not readily adapt themselves.

Pride is not necessarily, though it may sometimes be, the obstacle. “ There is a great deal of human nature in people,”—in kings and queens and princes and princesses, no less than in the rest of us. In common with the rest of us, they like the persons with whom they have close

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

daily intercourse to belong to their own social "set"; and that prejudice remains even when it is demonstrated to them that persons belonging to other social "sets" are of superior virtue and intelligence. They choose the *personnel* of their Courts on that principle when they can; and when they cannot, queer things happen, as, for instance, at the Court of King Amadeo of Spain, where an eminent and highly respectable politician once came to pay his respects to his sovereign, wearing attached to his dress shirt, the pink frill combined with it in the parcel in which the hosier had delivered the goods.

One does not, of course, suggest that the Grand Duchess called Prussians to her Court in order to prevent a mischance of that kind. Enough that she wanted an aristocracy, and could find one more easily in Prussia than anywhere else. The circumstances of her education had led her to believe that the "best people" were generally Prussians. She was too young to fly in the face of early training, and regard Prussians in any other light than that in which her family had taught her to regard them; and so she grew up under the spell of one of the influences by means of which the Hohenzollerns have, as we all know, sought to spin their spider's web across Central Europe, much as their army spun it across the Grand Duchy.

As regards the Grand Duchess's marriage, we may be pretty sure that the Kaiser also thought

## THE GRAND DUCHESS

of that, for it is the sort of thing that the Kaiser is prone to think of. Royal marriages, in his view, should be made, not in Heaven, but at Potsdam ; and one has only to glance at the Almanach de Gotha, in order to see what advantages he has long enjoyed for the prosecution of his policy. His Empire, as that work of reference shows, is full of more or less eligible Princes, more or less *in partibus*, always ready either to reign or to marry at his bidding for the greater glory of Germany. Religion is no obstacle ; the German Princes are of various religions, and if their religious opinions do not suit the circumstances of the particular case, they can be changed. The plan has been tried, without change of religion, in Holland, and, with it, in the Balkans. Why should it not have been tried in Luxemburg also ?

We can hardly doubt that it would have been tried if the war had been delayed a little longer ; but the matter was not so important that the soldiers need be kept waiting for the wedding, as they had been kept waiting for the widening of the Kiel Canal. In they marched, therefore, hustling out of their path all those who protested that Luxemburg was a neutral state ; and, soon after they had come, we met a lady who had been attached to the Grand Duchess's Court, and asked her how the Grand Duchess had behaved.

"She cried," was the simple answer. "I

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

was with her the other day, and saw her crying. She, and her sisters, and their governess,—they were all sitting round the room together,—all of them in tears.”

If those had been the only women’s tears which the Kaiser had caused to flow! They seem, on the contrary, to have been the only women’s tears which the Kaiser has sought to dry.

And that one can understand. The Kaiser doubtless regarded the Grand Duchess as one of the family party. He had always treated her as such; and though he is thick-skinned enough in all conscience, this was just the sort of situation which would be likely to move the most pachydermatous of men. Perhaps it occurred to him that there were certain resemblances between the Grand Duchess’s case and that of his own ancestress, Queen Louisa of Prussia. At any rate, he does seem to have been sorry, in his way, and to have felt that this was a case, not for brutality, but for tact. His notion of tact was to send a message to the Grand Duchess to the effect that he proposed to come and dine with her.

She let him come; and that is the point at which the historian loses track of established facts, and has only popular rumour to go upon. It may be that the Grand Duchess received the Kaiser for her people’s sake rather than her own, believing, or being advised, that that was the best way of

## THE GRAND DUCHESS

saving them from the fate of the Belgians ; but that was not the view which the people themselves—or those of them with whom I conversed—took of the matter. Their tendency was, rather, to return to the charge, and declare that their suspicions were now confirmed ; that it was now clearer than ever that the Grand Duchess was too fond of Prussians. I do not presume to judge ; I merely record what I heard ; and what I then heard certainly fits in with what I have since read about the “boycott.”

One would give a good deal to have overheard the conversation at the banquet to which the Kaiser invited himself ; but here again the truth is obscured by gossip. It has been said that the Kaiser reverted to the subject of marriage, suggesting that all would end in the happiest possible manner if only the Grand Duchess would accept the hand of a Hohenzollern. It has also been said that the Grand Duchess replied that she would rather be dead in her grave or immured in a nunnery than united in the bonds of wedlock to any member of that dishonoured house. But that is as it may be. I have seen the story in the English papers ; but it is not one of the stories I heard on the spot. Indeed, it conflicts with the general tone of most of the stories which I did hear on the spot ; and it also conflicts with what one hears of the political boycott of the Grand Duchess by her subjects.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

Perhaps the Kaiser proposed the marriage, and the Grand Duchess temporised, being equally afraid of him and of the citizens. That, on the whole, seems the most probable solution of the mystery, when one remembers that the Grand Duchess is young, and weak, and in a very difficult position. But there is one statement about the marriage which it is safe to make without fear that the facts will contradict it. The people of Luxemburg would regard such a marriage as an insult to their most sacred feelings, and would behave accordingly.

They are loyal enough in a sense; but loyalty, with them, means loyalty to themselves, their traditions, and their State—not loyalty to the dynastic Chief of the State. That loyalty would forbid them to accept a Hohenzollern or any other Prussian as the consort of their Grand Duchess; and a marriage such as the Kaiser is said to have tried to bring about would assuredly cost the Grand Duchess her throne as soon as the war was over, while her Prussian spouse would, at the same date, be propelled across the frontier by what the French call *un coup de pied quelque part*. There is many a lusty miner at Esch to whom the act of propulsion might confidently be entrusted.

## CHAPTER IV

### GOING ON AS USUAL

To return to Vianden.

Our English party remaining there consisted of a retired officer, long past the age of military activity, and his wife, together with two young ladies who were on a visit to them and had practically fought their way through mobilised Belgium, and reached the Grand Duchy by the very last train which got through. The reasons why they pressed on instead of turning back are their affair, not mine. Perhaps, having been brought up in peaceable places, they did not understand that the function of soldiers was to fight, and merely expected to have a front seat at a splendid spectacular display. It was, of course, lucky for them that they had only a back seat at the tragedy which was impending.

For a little while the invaders were too busy to take any notice of us ; and when they did take notice of us, we had no great difficulty in regularising our position. Luckily for ourselves, we had been caught well off the main line of communications, in circumstances which furnished a fair presumption of our *bona fides* ;

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

and the non-commissioned officer in command of our little garrison was not a suspicious person. His rank was that of *Wachtmeister*, or sergeant-major of infantry ; he belonged, not to the active army, but to the *Landwehr*, and, in times of peace, stood behind the counter of a crockery shop in Trier. There was nothing in his manner to make us rejoice when we heard that, having been moved on, he had come up against something a good deal harder than crockery in the neighbourhood of Verdun.

When, at last, I heard the word “ passes ” mentioned, I went to him, and asked for one. The soldiers were, at the time, drinking beer at a long table under the trees, by the river ; the *Wachtmeister* himself had to be fetched from a café. He took my card, on which I had inscribed particulars as to my age, nationality, profession, etc., and said that he must write to Trier for instructions, and that I might, in the meantime, go on as usual. The message which came from Trier a few days later was that I might still go on as usual, provided that I did not wander more than three kilometres from the front door of my hotel ; and the same remark applied to the other members of the party.

Those were the only restrictions placed on our movements for several weeks. Afterwards, as I shall show, the regulations became a little more stringent ; but, at first, it was even possible to



## GOING ON AS USUAL

obtain special leave to go a little beyond the prescribed limit. One could only go beyond it, however, in directions in which there was nothing in particular to be seen ; and I cannot pretend to have been the witness of any of the epoch-making events of the war. Nothing of that sort was visible from our verandah, though, if we listened hard, we could hear the big guns bombarding both Liège and Longwy. But we could study the souls of two peoples, and pick up a good many of those *petits faits vrais* which make history convincing and picturesque.

The bulk of the army was going to the front by rail or by other roads. We, though our verandah faced the street, saw only a few samples ; a few half-companies of Uhlans, a few companies of fusiliers, and a few batteries of the Saxon artillery. The presence of the last-named, coming from so far, was our first indication of the magnitude of the effort intended on the Western front ; and the men were given half-an-hour's interval for refreshment at our various inns and cafés. They were dragging howitzers as well as field guns, and we had an expert to point out to us that these were much larger than ordinary howitzers, and that their horses were just the right sort of horses for their work, and seemed in the very best condition.

Most of the men ate and drank in the street, bread and cheese and beer being carried to them

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

on trays ; but the boldest of them—a considerable proportion, in fact—found their way into our kitchen, and made rather a long stay there. After they had emerged and marched on, we naturally inquired what they had done and said ; and the cook made no mystery of the matter. Had they talked of glory and conquest ? we asked her ; and it appeared that not a man of them had done so, but that all their talk had been of wives and children whom they did not expect to see again.

Nor had they contented themselves with talking. They had so far given way to their emotions as to weep on the cook's shoulders,—one gallant Saxon head on each shoulder of the comely and sympathetic Luxembourgeoise,—sympathetic to the individual though hostile to the race—while a long row of other Saxon warriors stood *en queue*, awaiting their turns to take up the same privileged position, and there pour out the tale of their fears and sorrows. Nothing could have been less like an arrogant procession of bloodthirsty barbarians, marching through rapine and plunder to the overthrow of civilisation ; and one would fain hope that none of these men had a hand in the savage deeds done at Louvain, Aerschot, or Dinant, and that some at least of them will get home safely.

It was our first intimation that, from the Saxon point of view, the war was a horrible mistake ; and it bore out, after a fashion, what I once heard

## GOING ON AS USUAL

a Saxon officer say, not long before the war, in a London drawing-room, when the possibility of a coming war was mooted: "Of course, if war comes, we shall have to march with the rest; but I can tell you now that, whatever may be in the minds of the Prussians, we Saxons don't want war with England." Words to that effect have since, I believe, become almost a formula with the Saxons who surrender to our men in the field; and something will certainly come of the sentiment behind them, when the rot sets in. If the Saxons should then think—as they might very easily be made to think—that the Allies regard Dresden as a more suitable capital of any future German Confederation than Berlin, then the progress of the rot will surely be accelerated.

Still, the Saxons were by no means the only German soldiers whom we heard expressing a preference for peace. Among the men we had to do with—first *Landwehr* and then *Landsturm*—the preference seemed general, if not universal. What they may have been like when their blood was up I cannot say; in cold blood they frankly admitted that they had no quarrel with any one. So far as they had any theory at all as to the origin of the quarrel, they vaguely believed that Russia had begun it; but they certainly had never read Bernhardt and never heard of Treitschke.

Three of them, I remember—three lumbering peasants, sober and responsible family men—

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

came, one evening, into one of the caf  s, unburdened themselves to an enemy who paid for the beer, and omitted, whether from forgetfulness or natural politeness, to say "Hoch Deutschland" when they raised their glasses. Their talk showed that their reluctance to leave their own families was much greater than their desire to bring trouble into other families in other lands; but the thing which most appalled them was the unprecedented magnitude of the drama in which they were "walking on" as "supers." Their simple, honest faces, assumed a look, when they spoke of it, as though some one had whispered in their ears that all the terrors enumerated in the Litany were waiting for them round the corner; and they said:

*"Es ist ein Weltkrieg; es ist schrecklich."*

They intended no foreshadowing of "frightfulness" in the technical German sense, but thought of the war as of a cataclysm,—the awful outcome of the play of the unexplored forces of nature—something like an earthquake, or a volcanic eruption, or a tidal wave; and Germany is, in fact, full of people who take that objective view of the matter. I once heard even a *Feldwebel* talk in that strain, though *Feldwebels* are supposed to be typical men of blood and iron, and holy terrors alike to their foes and their inferiors.

He was what they call a "gentleman *Feldwebel*"

## GOING ON AS USUAL

—a man who had read and travelled. His business with me was to ascertain that I really was what I had represented myself to be—that the label *Schriftsteller* did not, in my case, cover a war correspondent or a military critic. I had, therefore, to tell him what I had written; and that broke the ice. So I had written of the Romantic Movement? He, too, was interested in the Romantic Movement. I had written a Life of Byron? He was a great admirer of Byron, though he preferred Shakespeare; he was, in fact, reading “Hamlet” when he received his call to the colours.

That was the link by way of which he got on to the subject of war in general and this war in particular—*dieser schrecklicher Krieg*, as he called it. He did not look horrified, like the peasants, but, rather, pained and grieved. He feared that this was going to be “a very long war,”—which shows that he was, in some ways, wiser in his generation than the German General Staff; and he went on murmuring, with half-closed eyes: “Already so many dead! So many thousands dead!”

I saw him afterwards, in other moods—especially when the news of the fall of Armentières made him confident and cockahoop; but it is in this dreamy after-dinner mood—the mood of a man who had been drinking a sound claret instead of beer—that I shall always prefer to

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

picture him. He, at least, I feel sure, has never sung Lissauer's "Song of Hate"; and I met another man who would not only refuse to sing it, but has his answer ready for any one who may wish him to.

He was a coachman in the service of one of the landed proprietors in our neighbourhood, and was wounded near Longwy in such a way that he will never see service again. It was his grievance that when he fell out, no comrade was allowed to fall out with him and bandage his hurts. Things were not going very well for Germany that day, so the wounded had to be left with the dead, to take their chance. Presently some French peasants came up, and the coachman thought his last hour had come, as he had been told that the French peasants were accustomed to cut off the noses of the wounded.

But nothing of the sort. The French peasants picked the wounded cavalryman up, and carried him to their cottage, and put him to bed, and made good soup for him, and nursed him for a couple of days, and then took him to Longwy, where he was found in the hospital when that fortress fell. And that at a time when the German guns were battering the houses in Longwy town to pieces, and Longwy citizens were in flight, complaining that all their worldly wealth had been destroyed at a stroke, and that nothing was left to them except the clothes on their

## GOING ON AS USUAL

backs and the coins in their pockets. The coachman cavalryman understood.

"No one shall ever abuse the French to me again," he said, when he got home. "They treated me a great deal better than any German officer ever did."

Nor was he by any means the only German soldier in Luxemburg who thought more highly of his enemies than of his officers. The number of German bullets which Luxemburg surgeons working the Red Cross took out of the bodies of German officers was considerably larger than could be accounted for by the low standard of marksmanship in the German army; and there were many reported cases of German soldiers whose officers had reprimanded them, tapping their cartridge boxes after the officers had passed on, and saying: "All right, my friend. The first of these is for you."

So much, for the present, for the soldiers. As for the officers, even those of high rank did not speak with a single voice about the war. The majority of them, I do not doubt, held the view of the Major who undertook to explain to a Luxemburg friend of ours what war was like and what were its objects as they appeared to German eyes.

"You don't understand it at all," he said. "The inwardness of the present war is this: Germany, just now, has too little money, and too

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

many men. We're going to remedy that. The money we propose to find in Paris ; the superfluous men we rely upon the French to kill for us while we are on the way there."

Bernhardi himself could not have expressed himself with a more engaging candour ; but there were other officers, though only a few, who expressed themselves in quite another tone. In particular, there was a certain Colonel, billeted in the house of one of the more prominent citizens of Diekirch, where a large German contingent was concentrated, and held, for some time, in reserve. He wandered about the house, like a man demented, muttering to himself.

"It is too terrible," he was heard to say, "too terrible. I cannot bear it. Germany is engaged in an unrighteous war."

Those were his last words when he retired to bed. In the morning, he failed to come down to breakfast, and some one went up to his room, to see what was the matter. He was found dead—his revolver beside him, and his brains blown out.

Of course, the matter was hushed up ; of course, it was announced that the Colonel had died suddenly of apoplexy ; equally, of course, no one in the neighbourhood was deceived. The Colonel had taken his own life in too public a manner for the truth to be hidden from any one who cared to know it.



## CHAPTER V

### “SPIES ON THE BRAIN”

THE excitement of the first few days soon died down. Troops only overflowed on to our road when the other roads were crowded. When the other roads ceased to be crowded, the only soldiers whom we saw were our Wachtmeister and his men, and the patrols on bicycles, and the staff officers who whizzed by on motors; and there was something almost uncanny in the ensuing calm and the sensation which it brought us of living perpetually under the menace of the unknown.

In reality, of course, we pass the whole of our lives under that menace. Even the immediate future is always hidden from us, and anything may happen at any time. Still, though we never know what an hour or a day may bring forth, we always live as if we did know, or at least in the confident expectation that things will go on pretty much as usual. And now that expectation was rudely taken from us. Nothing, for some days, had been going on as usual, and therefore nothing was now predictable, except that further surprises were certainly in store for us. They might be delayed,

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

but at any given moment, it was more likely than not that something startlingly dramatic—and perhaps something disagreeable—was just about to happen.

If one had had work to do, one would have missed the feeling. A “job” links up the moments, and so creates the impression that everything will continue as before. But we had no jobs, and no certainty, until we had felt our way a little, that we were not surrounded by spies, eavesdroppers, and *agents provocateurs*. After a little while, of course, we came to know our associates, though there was one man whose frank and furious conversation created a doubt which still remains whether he was an *agent provocateur* or a genuine enemy of Germany. That took a little time, however, and, meanwhile, we mostly lived with our own thoughts.

The days seemed long, and we spent most of them in deck chairs in the hotel garden, wondering, until we got tired of wondering, what was the way out of this trap in which we had been caught, and how many weeks or months or years it would be before we found it. I tried to read, but found it very difficult to concentrate my thoughts. One book which I found lying about, and struggled with, was “Sense and Sensibility”; but I ended by throwing it away with the feeling that Jane Austen was a fussy old maid who was making a great to-do about very little. A much inferior

## “SPIES ON THE BRAIN”

book suited me better: *La Bavière et la Saxe* by Jules Huret, borrowed for me by René Englemann from the Diekirch Library. From that, at least, I got one story appropriate to the times in which we were living.

It was a story told to the author by one of the few German prisoners taken by the French in 1870. He had been boarded out in the house of a farmer who treated him as one of the family and became so attached to him that he ended by offering him his daughter's hand in marriage, and sped him on his way, when the end of the war brought his release, with the affectionate injunction: *Revenez vite, mon fils*. I wondered whether that was the spirit in which the Germans now intended to entertain any prisoners who fell into their hands; but I do not wonder any longer. My curiosity on that branch of the subject has long since been satisfied. At Ruhleben . . . but I must not digress, but relate the incident which first brought home to me a sense of the realities, as well as the spectacular effects, of war.

There was a certain Müller,—or rather, a certain man whom I shall call Müller, because there are reasons why I prefer not to mention his real name; and one day, quite at the beginning of the war, somebody came to us with the news:

“The Prussians have arrested Herr Müller.”

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

I had to think a moment ; but then I remembered the man. He was a loud-voiced, self-assertive Prussian, who lived in some style in one of the better houses just across the frontier. People spoke of him as a *roué* and a ne'er-do-well ; but I know nothing about that. I only know that he was a man of striking appearance, who spoke English fluently, and had turned up, one evening, in a cafe in which I was sitting, and argued, presenting the Austrian case against Serbia with the truculence of a bullying K.C. People said that he was engaged to be married to a spinster who kept a boarding-house, somewhere in Prussia, not very far away.

" Why have they arrested him ? " I asked.

" Because they suspected him. They say he is a spy. His letters were opened in the post. They thought he was sure to be a spy because they knew that he was living beyond his means."

That is how the mind of the Prussian military authorities works. They are accustomed to employ so many unnecessary spies—they will send a Secret Service man, for instance, to take the name and address of the blacksmith at Burnham-on-Crouch, on the off chance that a Prussian horse may some day cast a shoe in the neighbourhood—that they suspect their enemies of doing the same, and see a spy in every man whom they do not pertinently know to be nothing of the kind. So they had suspected this un-

## “ SPIES ON THE BRAIN ”

fortunate Herr Müller, who probably knew nothing more than he had read in the newspapers, and were requiring him to prove that he had not been in treasonable communication with the enemy.

“ Did they arrest him in the Grand Duchy ? ”  
I enquired.

“ No, they didn’t want a scandal, or another protest from Eyschen, so they lured him across the frontier, and took him there.”

They had, in fact, played the Delilah trick on him—the part of Delilah being entrusted to a certain Frau Burgomaster, in a neighbouring village. Frau Burgomaster had been required to invite Herr Müller to a tea-party ; and the gendarmes had carried him off from Frau Burgomaster’s drawing-room, with his mouth full of Frau Burgomaster’s muffins. The lady was afterwards pointed out to me, and I took stock of her. She was a very commonplace, dumpy Delilah, far fatter than a Delilah has any right to be ; but that is neither here nor there. My business is with the dramatic sequel.

It happened at dinner-time—we dined at mid-day. The dining-room was nearly empty. Four guests sat at one end of the large and lofty room ; at the other end, close to the entrance which communicated with the kitchen and the offices, sat the landlord with his small party. We conversed in low tones, as one is apt to do in such

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

a large room, and we thought it an happy omen that our only decoration was a picture of the *Kronprinzessin Cecilia*—not the lady, but the ship which had fled all across the Atlantic to avoid the British Navy.

Presently a stranger entered through the door near the landlord's table,—that Member of Parliament for Vianden who has already been presented as the bearer of the news that the Prussians were at the Luxemburg railway station. His manner was agitated, and his face was as white as our table-cloths. He spluttered out something in German—a language of which I then had only a smattering. All that I caught was the word "*erschossen* "; but one of the ladies evidently caught something more.

"What did you say?" she called excitedly across the room, in high shrill tones.

The Member of Parliament spoke again—this time in French. I understand French well enough; but his voice was low, and as the remark was not addressed to me, I was not listening very attentively. I caught, however, the word *fusillé*; but the lady who had already spoken was more excited than ever. She had been longer at Vianden, and knew most of the people in the neighbourhood at least by name. She rose from her seat, and called the question:

"What is it? I didn't quite understand. You didn't say that Herr Müller had shot himself?"

## “ SPIES ON THE BRAIN ”

The Member of Parliament raised his voice, and gave it out in English :

“ Herr Müller is to be shot in the Trier prison at three o'clock this afternoon.”

And then there was “movement,” especially among the ladies. They had learnt, for the first time, what the Germans mean when they say that “war is war,” and received their first object-lesson on the text: “In the midst of life we are in death.” Herr Müller, I imagine, was no more to any of them than to me ; but some had known him, whereas I had only seen him. On them, therefore, the news fell like a moral bomb-shell, suddenly breaking up the old order of things, and scattering fixed ideas.

And quite unnecessarily, for one comes to the anti-climax that the news was false,—the first of those innumerable false rumours about the War which we began by accepting as Gospel truths, but gradually learnt to distrust. Herr Müller had not been shot, or even sentenced ; his case had been adjourned. It was to linger on as a *cause célèbre*, occupying the gossips of Vianden for many months to come. We heard that Herr Müller had been released, and then we heard that he had been re-arrested, and each of these reports was repeated several times. Herr Müller, it appeared was to be seen popping in and out of prison pretty much as some people are to be seen popping in and out of public-houses. It was

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

also whispered that he had tried to buy his freedom by the offer of a large sum of money towards the conduct of the war, and had been asked whence he proposed to obtain that money, and had declined to answer the question because there was a lady in the case ; but that is a statement for which I do not vouch. I only know that, when I last heard of Herr Müller, he was said to be under lock and key, though now, for anything I know to the contrary, he may be commanding an Army Corps ; and the whole story seems to me symptomatic of the “ jumpiness ” of Prussian nerves—a “ jumpiness ” of which we received many proofs from time to time, and by no means only in the early days.

We got one such proof from the frequency of the false alarms. There was a panic at Luxembourg, or rather in the outskirts of Luxembourg, where horsemen galloped about shouting : “ Where are the French ? We hear that they are close at hand.” And that at a time when the Crown Prince’s Army was holding the French at Longwy. There was another panic at Diekirch, where the bugle sounded the alarm at the dead of night, and the *Landwehr* nearly fired on the *Landsturm* because they did not recognise their uniforms, and would have done so had not an officer galloped forward, taking, as he thought, his life in his hands, and shouting : “ *Was für Soldaten sind sie ?* ”



## “ SPIES ON THE BRAIN ”

But that, perhaps, was excusable, for the uniforms certainly were very quaint. It was said that they had been worn by Blucher's soldiers at Waterloo—or perhaps it was by Frederick the Great's soldiers at Rossbach—and had been fetched in a hurry from a Military Museum because there would not otherwise have been enough uniforms to go round.

I saw the uniform myself, on the platform at Diekirch, and then again on the platform at Bentheim on my way home, though, in the latter case, while the helmet was antique, the trousers were of patched modern corduroy. The man wearing the garb, looked in each case, less like a warrior than like a world-weary Drury Lane super, a-thirst in a parching land ; and I can well understand that the more modern sections of their own army did not quite know what to make of them.

The chief proof of “ jumpiness,” however, was that dread of spies of which I have spoken. I have given instances of it, and I could give several more. The worst manifestations of it consisted in arresting harmless people, locking them up and then forgetting all about them. There was one very bad case of this kind which I heard of at Ruhleben : a man who had been (I think it was) eight months in solitary confinement without being able to ascertain with what offence he was accused. No notice was taken of

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

him until he was caught trying to communicate with the outside world in invisible ink. Then the Governor of the prison wrote to the War Office to enquire how he should be punished, and the War Office replied that it was unaware that this prisoner was still detained, but that he should be sent to the Camp for Interned Civilians, pending further investigations. They are investigations which should certainly be continued after the war, even if Von Falkenhayn himself has to be placed in the dock.

Nothing quite so bad as that happened in the Grand Duchy; but there, as elsewhere, the Germans certainly had spies on the brain. Their usual way of looking for spies was to stop people whom they knew perfectly well on the high road and require them to show the passes which they knew perfectly well to have been given to them. There was more than one *rafle* of that kind on the road from Vianden to Roth, which is the very last place in which a spy would be likely to have business. That I myself was never suspected I probably owe to the intelligence of an educated Feldwebel, who insisted that I should try to talk German to him, and drew the proper inference from the way in which I fumbled with that awful language; but I was, as I shall have to relate presently, forbidden the use of the public dining-room at Luxemburg, and required, together with my wife, to sit down to my evening meal on a

## “ SPIES ON THE BRAIN ”

first-floor landing under the converging eyes of a plain-clothes policeman and a sentinel with a fixed bayonet, for fear lest any spy should endeavour to hold communication with us.

He was an amiable policeman, however, as German policemen go ; and he had, at least, the grace to apologise to the ladies :

“ I know it is inconvenient,” he said, “ but it is necessary. I am obliged even to forbid you to speak any language but German to the waitresses, and I shall have to place a sentry outside your bedroom-door. The town is full of spies, and these Luxemburg people do not seem to like us.”

They do not. The fact has already been hinted at in these pages, and further evidence in support of it was to be forthcoming before the evening was over.

One piece of evidence was the particular and almost ostentatious attention with which we were waited on. From the manner of the maids one would have supposed that the first-floor landing was the place of honour reserved for guests of special distinction, that that distinction was admitted to be justly ours, and that the German soldier and the German policeman were our flunkys.

Another piece of evidence came to light on the following morning when we heard that, during the night, a *Landsturm* man, doing sentry-go

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

in his paste-board helmet, had been bonneted from behind by a lusty young Luxemburger. Our detective had been kept from his bed, drawing up *procès verbaux*, hearing evidence, and trying to identify the sentinel's assailant ; but his bag was like that of the apostles, who toiled all night and caught nothing.

No, most emphatically, the Luxemburgers do not like the Germans, though there are, on the face of it, certain reasons why any one who did not know the Germans, would expect them to.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE INVADERS' UNPOPULARITY

LUXEMBURG is in the German Zollverein and does most of its trade with Germany. In spite of its inclusion in the Latin Monetary Union, most of the business is transacted with German coins and paper. German capital has built the Luxemburg railways and opened up the Luxemburg mines. The *patois* which the Luxemburgers speak among themselves, even in the best circles, is a German *patois*. German tourists are the best patrons of their first-class hotels ; German commercial travellers are the best patrons of their second-class hotels. Many Germans have settled in their towns, and taken farms in their country districts ; many of their daughters are married to Germans. From all these facts one might, before the war, have inferred some bond of sympathy between Luxemburgers and Germans ; but if one had looked for it one would have failed to find it. I did look for it, and discovered, instead, an attitude akin to that of the undergraduate towards the Dean of Christ Church, expressed in the famous quatrain :

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

“ I do not love thee, Dr. Fell,  
The reason why I cannot tell ;  
But this I know, and know full well,  
I do not love thee, Dr. Fell.”

Or rather, to be quite accurate, that seemed to me to be the attitude of the Luxemburgers towards the Prussians ; for Germans other than Prussians were vague, unreal figures to them. They generally spoke of Germans as Prussians, and they hardly ever spoke of Prussians as Germans ; and the word Prussian has, from time immemorial, been a term of abuse among them. Luxemburg nurses call naughty children “ Prussians,” pretty much as English nurses call them “ Young Turks ” ; and they delight in telling you that a real Prussian generally loses his temper if a stranger salutes him as *Preuss*, because he knows that the epithet implies unpleasant qualities. Why ?

The phenomenon, as a matter of fact, is not local but general, and almost universal. Germans, wherever they go, have an undeniable tendency to get themselves disliked. An American friend wrote to me, the other day, to say that they were regarded with no less aversion in the United States than in England. No one of their avowed enemies has been quite so successful in holding them up to ridicule and contempt as Louis Raemaekers, the Dutch caricaturist, on whose head they have put a price ; and the disdain

## THE INVADERS' UNPOPULARITY

expressed for them by the Rumanians has been echoed by the native chieftains of Togoland.

"If you were a Frenchman, or an Englishman, or a Serb," said a Rumanian police constable recently to the special correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, "I would willingly stretch a point in your favour, and let you pass the cordon, but no exceptions whatever are made here in favour of Germans."

"We, the foreigners of Togoland," wrote the representative aborigines of that German Colony the other day, to General Dobell, "wish to make ourselves useful to the Allied Forces, one way or the other; after all, we decided to make a little subscription in aid of the Allied Forces, as per attached lists. In conclusion, we pray God to help the Allied Forces quickly in the forthcoming operations."

And the letter enclosed postal orders for £43 10s.: not a large sum, of course, but quite large enough to show on which side the sympathies of the chieftains of Togoland were enlisted.

So once more one asks: Why? What is the secret of this unpopularity which pursues the Germans everywhere from the civilised centres of Europe to the wild West African bush? The fact underlying the question is admitted by the Germans themselves; the problem which arises out of the fact is one which their philosophers are continually trying to tackle in the true scientific

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

spirit. Already, when I was at Vianden, they were beginning to get to work on it,—calling God and the President of the United States to witness that the sack of Louvain and the massacre of Dinant were, so to say, humane surgical operations, tending to abbreviate the agony of the sufferers from the inevitable cruelties of war. Later, when I was at Ruhleben, they were on to the theme, like a pack of hounds in full cry, writing article after article in the *Tageblatt* and other papers, bearing the pathetic title, “ Why are we hated ? ”

Why? Well, in so far as the hatred of the coloured races is concerned, the question can be answered out of the mouth of a German traveller who visited the German colonies shortly after Herr Dernburg—the gentleman who lately returned from a Kultur expedition to the United States—had modified the rigour of their government.

“ The new civil administration of Herr Dernburg,” writes the traveller, “ is far worse than the old military *régime*. Formerly if a native was lacking in what any kind of white man considered the proper respect due to him, the white man had but to report it, and the offender was severely punished. *Nowadays the plaintiff has to produce evidence.* ”

That is to say that, in the view of a representative German, the only sound basis of colonial



## THE INVADERS' UNPOPULARITY

government is the right of every German to wallop his own nigger ; and yet, in the face of that theory, German philosophers express surprise that niggers should club their resources and send postal orders for £43 10s., together with their respectful compliments, to the enemies of Germany.

Perhaps, however, that story had not yet reached them. At all events, I did not meet it in any of the articles which I read while I was at Ruhleben, studying Germany from within. These, as a rule, attributed the general dislike of Germany to the jealousy of commercial rivals and envy of the marvellous feats of German arms, stimulated by the lies with which Reuter's Agency poisoned the wells of truth from which the Wolff Telegraphic Bureau drew comforting draughts of crystal clarity for home consumption. A mission of cultured German women, some of the writers thought, ought to be sent out at once to woo the neutrals and win their love for Germany. But one writer went—or, at least, fancied that he went—a little deeper.

According to him, it was all a matter of the association of ideas. The peoples who are loved are those whose mere names conjure up romantic memories and thoughts of artistic and delightful things. The man who owned a Boule clock, or had drunk French champagne, could not help loving France ; the man who had made a

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

pilgrimage to the Vatican could not help loving Italy. Germany on the other hand, had forfeited her best claims to the affection of the world when the old era celebrated in Bulwer's "Pilgrims of the Rhine" had given place to the new era of astounding material prosperity. People did not associate the name of Germany with any artistic product, but with cheap textiles, patent medicines, aniline dyes, and manures—most useful things, but not things which touched the deeper sensibilities of the purchasers. Moreover, the representative men of Germany were not men whose personalities fired the imagination to enthusiasm. Such men as Ballin, and Rathenau, and Thyssen, and Krupp von Behlen loomed too large in the foreground of the picture.

"In short," the writer proceeded, "there are only two Germans whose personalities have, of late years, impressed the imagination of foreign peoples; the Kaiser and Count Zeppelin. But the former, alas, only inspires them with envy, whereas the latter only inspires them with terror."

It is an ingenious theory of German unpopularity; but my Luxemburg friends would not have accepted it; nor do I. And perhaps we are better judges than any German philosopher, however hard he may try to view the matter, as he would say, objectively. The man who entertains an aversion ought, in the nature of the case, to be better able to explain it than any of those

## THE INVADERS' UNPOPULARITY

for whom the aversion is entertained ; and that is specially the case if the aversion is one to which one was not born, but to which one has been gradually led by observation and experience. So I will try to be as objective as the Germans themselves, and I will begin by endorsing my landlord's rejoinder to one of my own sweeping tirades.

“ Still, you know,” he said, “ the individual German is sometimes quite a good fellow.”

Naturally ; it would be strange if he were not. The morals and manners of the best individuals are always better than those of the groups to which they belong ; and those of us who have been far enough into Germany to distinguish one German from another know perfectly well that they are not all tarred with the same brush. There was, for instance, a German soldier at Ruhleben whom the British soldiers rewarded with three cheers, because he looked the other way when they were smoking in forbidden places, and showed himself a sportsman by throwing up a soft job in order to go to the front. Our Commandant at Ruhleben, again, being serenaded by the Camp band on his seventy-eighth birthday, thanked the musicians with tears streaming down his cheeks, and a voice quivering with emotion, expressing his heartfelt regret that the circumstances of the time did not permit him to say all that he should like to say. I could multiply

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

examples ; and I have heard English residents in the country protest :

“ I have lived twenty years in Germany, and I have never met a German whom I should have believed to be capable of doing the things which I know these very men to have done.”

The answer to that, however, is that the criminal seldom does strike you as being capable of his crimes when you meet him at a pleasant social gathering ; and it is, further, a fact, that most of us, when we generalised about the Germans, even before the war, did so in the spirit in which the Northern farmer generalised about the poor. On the whole, *exceptis excipiendis*, the less we saw of them, the better we were pleased ; and we observed that the people who were brought into close daily contact with them loathed them. The Alsatians, the Danes, and the Poles notoriously do so ; and many of the Luxemburgers gave me the impression of shrinking from them as from noxious insects. The claims of objectivity require that one should find the explanation in some flaw in the German character.

“ Scientifically-trained barbarians ” was the description of them which a Ruhleben friend of mine thought out for them in the course of two months’ solitary confinement. It is good, but it does not quite furnish the clue. There are barbarians who make themselves quite agreeable when not actually engaged upon the methods of

## THE INVADERS' UNPOPULARITY

barbarism ; and even the German sometimes ceases to be a barbarian if you whisper the word *gemüthlichkeit* in his ear, in the proper tone of voice. So we must look deeper. The historical rôle of the German has, no doubt, been that of barbarian—his incursions have several times broken up valuable civilisations ; but we must characterise him further if we want to understand him, and our own feelings towards him—our feelings, for instance, that he is far more odious than the Turk who, after all, commits atrocities on a more colossal scale.

“ The Turk is such a gentleman,” people are apt to say ; and that is the last thing any one ever dreams of saying about the German ; but we must not be satisfied with characterisation by negatives.

The first fact to seize is, perhaps, that the Germanism of Germans is an artificial product, invented in Prussia, and fabricated with Teuton thoroughness in military schools, barracks and universities, throughout the empire. The natural German has many commonplace virtues, but no outstanding features. He is just a human being like another—excellent and exceedingly plastic raw material, readily moulded into any racial form. Given the right environment, he becomes, almost in the twinkling of an eye, a Frenchman, a Dutchman, or an Italian, a Pole, a Lithuanian, or a Czech. One can even picture

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

him growing a pig-tail and becoming a good Chinaman, or painting his face and becoming a good Choctaw. The popular saying, "Once a German always a German," is, in short, the most misleading catch-word that ever was paraded as a profound political generalisation; and it is precisely because it is an unsound maxim that one hears people like my Luxemburg landlord saying :

"Still, you know, the individual German is sometimes quite a good fellow."

At the same time, just because of his plasticity and adaptability, the German responds to Germanising, exactly as he responds to other influences; and the Germanism which he so quickly loses abroad is easily imposed upon him at home by a melodramatic Emperor, a "blood and iron Chancellor," or a jaundiced idealist like Treitschke. And, when he is thus thoroughly Germanised, his characteristics are, roughly speaking, as follows :

In the first place, he is a *parvenu* : not a shy and timorous *parvenu*, but a self-assertive one; not sure of himself, indeed—for no *parvenu* is ever that—but determined to behave as if he were, force his way into the best circles and maintain himself there by means of a bullying manner. In the second place, though he poses as a strong man, he is really weak and conscious of his weakness—one upon whom the maintenance of his authority imposes an almost intolerable

## THE INVADERS' UNPOPULARITY

strain. His nearest analogue in English life is the weak schoolmaster.

We all know that schoolmaster and what happens when he is face to face with a difficult Fifth Form. He may be quite a good fellow ; but it is impossible for him to behave as such. His unsupported personality failing to inspire respect, he reports boys frequently and punishes them furiously ; he ends with violent measures of repression of which no one who knew him would have believed him to be capable.

Similarly with the German who has to govern a reluctant population. The Proconsul who can rule a province strictly and yet win the affection of the inhabitants, after the manner of Albuquerque and John Lawrence, belongs to a type unknown in Germany. The typical German Proconsul rubs his subjects the wrong way because he has neither tact nor manners, tempts them to presume because they perceive him to be weak, and then suppresses them with punishments out of all proportion to the offence, and, in the end, indulges in "frightfulness" because he is afraid.

We hammered out that truth about the Germans in Luxemburg, when we heard what had happened at Louvain ; and we may find a fresh illustration of it in the murder of Edith Cavell at Brussels, and in the excuses offered for that murder in the German Press. The plea there urged is the plea of necessity ; which is to say

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

that the act was due, not to the resolute savagery of a strong man, but to the wobbling savagery of a weak man, who really felt that he must do something dreadful because he found that he was becoming an object of contempt. And that, again, is to say that Von Bissing is a coward and a cur who is now probably kept awake at night by the reflection that he is governing Belgium with a Belgian rope round his neck.

I sincerely hope so ; and my Luxembourg friends hope so too. The fact that the behaviour of the Germans in the Grand Duchy was relatively—though only relatively—correct, did not cause them to mince words when they told me what they thought of the Germans, or hinder them from actions which, without being openly hostile, were sufficiently illustrative of their point of view.



## CHAPTER VII

### PRO-GERMAN RESIDENTS

It must not be supposed that we had absolutely no pro-German residents at Vianden. We had no less than two, for Vianden is, as things go in the Grand Duchy, quite a pro-German village ; and we had even a sprinkling—though a very small sprinkling—of actual Germans. Criticism of these persons was one of the ways in which the general sentiment of the population expressed itself.

The most important lady in the village—or, at all events, the lady who occupied the largest house—was a German ; the widow of a highly placed and profusely decorated functionary in the Rhine Provinces. She swelled with expectations of German glory and aggrandisement ; but she also had her qualms and apprehensions, some of which it is interesting to remember in the light of subsequent events.

“What we’re afraid of,” she began ; but then she corrected herself and started afresh.

“ No, we’re not afraid of anything, but what we think might possibly happen is this : that, after we’ve driven the French Government out of

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

Bordeaux, it might, instead of surrendering, take refuge in En land, and persist in carrying on the war from there."

So that she, at least, had a glimmering of the significance of sea-power; but she showed her appreciation of German land-power by deeds as well as words, making a German flag with her own hands, and inducing one of the two pro-Germans to defy public opinion by hanging it out of his first-floor window. That was what made her Luxemburg neighbours furious.

"It has been settled among us," they told me, "that she shall be forced to leave the town as soon as ever the war is over"; and they hinted at the measure which would be taken to compel her retreat; a frigid boycott by day, and a tumultuous cats' concert outside her house by night.

Still worse, they indicated, will be the fate of the gentleman, pro-German and retired tanner, who complied with the great lady's injunctions in the matter of the flag.

For that was not his only manifestation of pro-Germanism. He also lent the Germans his motor, and even acted as their *chauffeur*, undertaking to drive them up and down the country at any hour of the day or night; and he only ceased to do so on account of two unpleasant incidents. A *Landsturm* sentinel nearly shot him in the dark because he had forgotten the password; and a

## PRO-GERMAN RESIDENTS

Feldwebel who considered that pro-Germanism should be its own reward, refused to re-imburse him for his expenditure on petrol.

Those untoward occurrences cooled his ardour to some extent ; but it was not because of them that he temporarily took down the flag. He did that because an old maid who kept a shop somewhere in his vicinity gave him a good talking to, and frightened him. If the enemy's aeroplanes came that way, she told him, the observers would be sure to notice the flags, and would drop bombs on his house in the belief that it was the headquarters of the German Army. Then fear achieved what shame had failed to accomplish, and the pro-German took down the flag, telling the Germans that he was afraid it might be spoiled by rain ; but their arguments induced him to hang it out again, and his fate, after his protectors are withdrawn, is as certain as that of his lady patron.

" Will it be something lingering with boiling oil in it ? " I asked.

" It is more likely to be something short and sharp with broomsticks in it," was the reply. " The women will probably drive him down the street into the river."

It is a pleasant picture this of the women of Vianden playing the part of the women of Marblehead ; but I fear we shall not see it. The projected victim, I fancy, will skip over the

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

frontier when he sees the hour of martyrdom approaching.

Our other pro-German was the chemist; and he was comparatively harmless. His neighbours tapped their foreheads significantly when his name was mentioned; and when a conversation with him which began about tooth-powder ended by his telling me, *apropos* of nothing in particular, that he would have been a rich man if he had not been worsted in a financial transaction involving many millions of francs by a French cabinet minister, it seemed to me that this gesture of theirs might very well be warranted, and I knew how much importance to attach to those rumours of the progress of the war which our chemist retailed, together with his medicaments.

"Belfort has fallen," he told me, "and there has been a great naval battle in which fourteen English dreadnoughts have been sunk. It is official. I have read the despatch with my own eyes."

But when the papers arrived, the lost dreadnoughts turned out to be fishing smacks, while the story of the fall of Belfort appeared to have been started by a small boy indecently eager to sell newspapers on the platform of the Cologne railway station. So I took the measure of the chemist as a source of information, and was able to listen calmly to his political opinions, which were as follows :

## PRO-GERMAN RESIDENTS

“ I have no objection whatever,” he said, “ to the inclusion of Luxemburg in the German Empire on the same terms as, say, the Grand Duchy of Baden. We already have all the disadvantages of belonging to Germany, and we may as well have the advantages also.”

Whether he was right or wrong, however, from the Luxemburg point of view, in his opinion, he was practically the only man to hold it. The only other people who seemed to incline in the same direction were certain civil servants whose continued tenure of their offices might depend upon German good-will ; and they may reasonably be presumed to have been insincere. The general view was that the Prussian was equally intolerable in peace and in war ; a *parvenu* incapable of politeness, and a bully devoid of scruples. Evidence to that effect was continually accumulating in my hands ; and I made quite an anthology of anecdotes and utterances illuminating that branch of the subject. Let me lead off with the verdict of the Prime Minister himself—M. Eyschen, whose recent death, probably hastened by Prussian vexations, is a great loss to his country, and who summed up his opinions of the Prussians in particularly vigorous language.

A foreigner belonging to one of the Allied countries had asked M. Eyschen's advice and help on some matter of business which would have

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

to pass through the Prussian military authorities. The advice was to let the business slide and do nothing which would attract the attention of the Prussians—*ne pas les mettre en éveil*. And then followed the criticism :

*“ Vous connaissez cette mentalité prussienne. Je n'ai pas besoin, je suppose, de vous renseigner là-dessus. Ce sont les derniers des cochons. Ils sont capables de n'importe quelle cochonnerie pour gagner la partie.”*

That is how the Prussians are viewed from above in Luxemburg. How they appear when viewed from below may be illustrated by the estimate of a village innkeeper, garnered before the War began. He sat discussing them over a pot of beer.

“ No, we don't like them,” he said. “ They settle here in rather large numbers, and they mix with us, and even intermarry with us ; but we don't like them, and we don't trust them. I don't know why it is, but we suspect them. On the other hand, we don't suspect the French, and we do like them.”

So spoke the representatives of two social extremes ; and I also collected the opinions of intermediate classes. There was a village school-master, for instance—a man who had travelled rather widely for any one of his calling.

“ We Luxemburgers,” he said, “ prefer to be independent ; ‘ we want to remain what we are.’

## PRO-GERMAN RESIDENTS

But, if we had to choose, we would far rather be under the yoke of France or England than under that of Germany."

There was a quiet lady of modest means with whom I discussed the topic. She scowled and said :

*" Ah ! monsieur ! Si seulement on pouvait exterminer cette race ! "*

And then there was an old woman in one of the shops ; a bent and feeble old woman about four feet high, in ordinary circumstances, I should say, the gentlest and most retiring of creatures. But she had heard the story of Louvain ; and her eyes flashed, and she shook her finger across her counter at the whole world of Prussians, saying :

*" Ce ne sont pas des hommes ; ce sont des bêtes féroces."*

And the stories ! Never once, during the whole of my stay in the Grand Duchy did I hear a story which showed the Prussians in an amiable light. Never did morning wear to evening without my hearing some story to their disadvantage. The stories of their grosser offences I have already dealt with ; but I think the Luxemburgers gloated with even more indignation over those trifling anecdotes which merely demonstrated their unfitness to be admitted to the society of gentlemen.

There was the story, for instance, of Bethmann-Hollweg, billeted in the house of some member of

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

the well-known Pescatore family, and commandeering a number of nibs which he found there. He wrote a graceful letter—graceful, that is to say, for a Prussian,—saying that he had taken the liberty of doing so because they suited his hand-writing better than any other nibs that he had ever used ; and the comment on that was :

“ H'm ! The burglar assuming the airs of an old familiar friend ! ”

It was petty ; but it was exasperating. Equally petty and still more exasperating was the action of a member of the proud house of Metternich, who was billeted on one of the most highly respected citizens of Diekirch. The reluctant host did his best for the unwelcome guest, serving him dinners of several courses, and regaling him on the best wine in the cellars. He naturally expected that so great a man would recompense him adequately for the outlay ; but when the hour for departure came, the Metternich went off in the small hours of the morning without paying his bill, merely depositing on the dining-room table his visiting card, bearing the message :

“ Best thanks for kind hospitality. God will repay you for it.”

“ And not even,” as the narrator put it to me, “ a five-mark piece for the chamber-maid.”

And then there was the story of the Prussian soldiers who dragged the drawing-room suites out of the Diekirch villa residences and sprawled



## PRO-GERMAN RESIDENTS

on them, in the gardens, in muddy boots ; and there were countless stories of Prussian subalterns hustling Luxemburg citizens out of their way, just as they had been accustomed to hustle civilians off the pavements at Berlin.

A Luxemburg Member of Parliament, for instance, was once hurrying, in his motor, to an important appointment when he found his way blocked by the car of a Prussian lieutenant, standing in the middle of the road. He politely asked the young man if he would be kind enough to allow him to pass. The lieutenant turned round, stared, and waved the elderly gentleman away with an insolent

*" Halte den Maul ! "*

The idiomatic English equivalent is " Hold your jaw " ; but Prussia is the only country in Europe in which an officer would employ the expression in conversation with a harmless stranger of dignified appearance.

Yet another story relates to the distribution of soup among the wounded who were brought to Esch. A worthy miner's wife had prepared it, and she was giving some French prisoners their share when a fierce Feldwebel interfered, saying :

" Serve our men first ; bread and water is good enough for these scoundrels."

That, too, was characteristically Prussian,—only in Prussia are such non-commissioned officers bred ; but the miner's wife rose to the

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

occasion. She lifted the bowl, and began to walk away with it. The Feldwebel asked her what she was going to do.

“ What I choose,” she answered. “ The soup is mine, not yours ; and if you don’t let me deal it out to French and Germans alike, I shall spill the whole of it on the ground.”

They are eloquent stories—the sort of stories that prove things. No one who has heard them will be surprised to learn that the Luxemburgers were not very eager volunteers for Red Cross work ; but it will also surprise no one to learn that the Germans regarded it as a matter of course that they would plunge into that work with ardour, and laid their plans and sent out their emissaries on that assumption.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SOME RED CROSS STORIES

THE missionary charged to preach the Red Cross Gospel at Vianden was the very important German lady whom I have already mentioned as likely to have to leave the village as soon as the war is over. She came, among other places, to our hotel, with the beautiful word *Barmherzigkeit* on her lips, expecting that every one who had a house would be only too delighted to turn it into a German hospital, and that she would find all the young women in the Grand Duchy pining for the privilege of nursing the valiant German soldiers.

Now, as a matter of fact, at the beginning of the war, not even the German ladies were unanimously pining for that privilege, except on the condition that they should be allowed to pick and choose their patients. The call for volunteers at Dusseldorf brought forth quite a number of young ladies of fashion, who asked to be enrolled as the nurses of "officers and *Einjähriger*\* only." The doctor who was taking their names sent them

\* Men who serve for one year only. They generally belong to a better social class than the others.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

to the right-about, with the winged words of scorn ringing in their ears ; but the warning was not lost upon the lady who was now looking round for recruits. She feared that she might hear the word " neutrality," and she went forward to meet it half way."

" You must not suppose," she said, " that you will only be nursing Germans. We are sure to have immense numbers of French, English, and Belgian prisoners ; and you will be able to nurse them as well. So in the name of *Barm-seligkeit* . . . etc."

Nothing could be fairer ; and, as there was a doctor in the neighbourhood who had a German wife, it looked as if the humane enterprise could be launched under hopeful auspices. No one, indeed, quite saw his way to surrender his house as a hospital ; but the village school-house was made available, the doctor promised to deliver a course of lectures for the instruction of the ignorant, a public meeting was called, humanitarian speeches were made, and we all looked out with curiosity for the arrival of the first consignment of wounded soldiers.

But they never came. The scheme collapsed as suddenly as it had been originated ; and it was not long before we discovered the reason why.

It appeared that, at the meeting at which it was proposed to take the names of the ladies willing to assist in the good work, a lady had

## SOME RED CROSS STORIES

arisen and uttered the thought which was in the minds of all the ladies.

“ I should like,” she said, “ to offer my services as a nurse for the French, the English, and the Belgian wounded. I am not prepared to nurse any others.”

There was a pause. Before the chairman or any other speaker could get in a word, another lady had arisen, in another corner of the hall, and piped out :

“ If there are any French, English, or Belgian wounded in the hospital, I shall be very happy to assist in nursing them.”

And then there arose a third lady, a fourth lady, a fifth lady—more ladies than I can count—each in her own words, making the same reply to the invitation. They were all willing to respond to the claims of *Barmseeligkeit* ; but they all put their own interpretation on those claims, holding as one of my friends afterwards summed it up :

“ The Prussians have made the mess, and the Prussians must clear it up.”

Such is the story of Red Cross enterprise at Vianden. I believe it is also the story of Red Cross enterprise at Diekirch and many other places in the Grand Duchy. To people of any other race, it might have occurred that here was an unrivalled opportunity of securing really humane treatment for their wounded prisoners ; but to the Prussians that thought did not occur.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

They preferred to dispense altogether with the assistance of nurses who sympathised with the victims of their Belgian barbarities.

In the capital, however, some Luxemburg ladies, as well as some Luxemburg doctors, did assist in the hospitals ; and it is to that fact that we are indebted for the various hospital stories which reached us. Most of them were stories of friction. A Luxemburg doctor, for instance, had to speak out because a Prussian officer had said that the French wounded must wait until the German wounded had been attended to.

“ In this hospital,” he said, “ I am your superior, and I shall take no orders from you. I shall attend to the wounded in the order in which I consider that they require attention.”

Then the Prussians gave way ; and they also gave way when the Luxemburg ladies resented, backing their resentment with a threat of resignation, an attempt to confine their services to the German wards, so that they might be unable to talk to the French prisoners in their own language. After that, of course, the Luxemburg ladies found many opportunities of manifesting their sympathies. They did so, for instance, on the day on which the Kaiserin visited the hospital, and left a flower on the bed of every sufferer—to the intense disgust of the French wounded, who saw only hypocrisy in the kindness of the Empress of barbarians, who had ravaged their homes in

## SOME RED CROSS STORIES

flagrant defiance of the laws of war. As soon as she had passed by, they tossed the flowers indignantly on to the floor, and the Luxemburg nurse consoled them.

"Never mind," she said. "I'll get a dust-pan and a brush, and we'll soon have this rubbish out of the way."

Other stories filtered through to us from the hospitals, and not all of them related to what had happened in the wards. It was through the hospital, for instance, that we heard of the little black soldier from Senegal, who defied his captors, broke away from them, and danced up and down the platform, yelling: *Vive la France! Vive la France!* It was through the hospital, again, that he heard of the Frenchman who had tried to reassure Luxemburg by thrusting his head out of the carriage window and shouting, before the soldiers had time to drag him back:

*"Vous êtes trop peureux, vous autres Luxembourgeois. Les choses marcheront très bien. Le drapeau français flotte à Mulhouse, à Schlettstadt, et à Colmar."*

Other stories were in a humorous vein—the story, for instance, of a dialogue between a Frenchman and a German, who were lying wounded side by side.

The Frenchman had a smattering of German, and the German had a smattering of French; and there was a Luxemburger present who knew

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

both languages. The time was just after the defeat which had induced the Crown Prince, as M. Jean Richepin picturesquely put it in the *Journal*, to "hide his bleeding hinder parts behind the walls of Metz." The German was muttering. He had, or thought he had, some news, and the Frenchman wanted to hear it.

"What is he saying?" he enquired.

"He says that the Germans have taken Verdun," replied the Luxemburger.

"Muck!" interjected the Frenchman with a gesture of incredulity—French scholars will divine the actual word which he employed; and then it was the German's turn. The word was not in his vocabulary—he thought it was the name of a place. He gesticulated proudly, and exclaimed:

*"Ja, das auch haben wir genommen."*

That was the sort of story which always rejoiced a Luxemburg heart; and they also took a particular delight in any story which held the Crown Prince up to ridicule. Never, at any moment, for them, was the Crown Prince the martial hero; he was always the grotesque Don Juan. They knew, for they had seen, that at the time when his armies, directed by his Chief of the Staff, were besieging Longwy and Verdun, he himself was generally taking his ease in a pleasure house at Esch. He lounged there, they said, in an easy-chair, with his legs dangling out of the window,



## SOME RED CROSS STORIES

and occasionally descended to brush up the whiskers of his orderlies with the vacuum cleaner attached to his motor car; and he also devoted a good deal of time to courting the daughters of Luxemburg, with the result that, if the Crown Princess desires evidence in support of that petition for divorce of which the world hears whispers from time to time, she could pursue her enquiries nowhere more hopefully than at Esch.

At Esch they would tell her—what would they not tell her at Esch?

They would tell her of the young lady in the tobacconist's shop (I think it was a tobacconist's shop, and I know it was a shop of some sort) who received through an orderly (or perhaps it was an aide-de-camp) an invitation to spend the evening with his Imperial Highness, and replied across the counter in the presence of customers that she did not sufficiently admire his Imperial Highness's particular style of beauty. They would tell her also of two young ladies who did, again and again, accept similar invitations, and they would add that these young ladies—the Demoiselles Kahn—are known from one end of the Grand Duchy to the other as *Die Kahn-Prinzessinen*.

For the general public in Luxemburg, in short, the Crown Prince is pretty much what he was for the general public in India when he paid his famous visit to that Dependency. There, too,

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

it will be remembered, he found a Kahn-Prinzessin—or a coloured equivalent,—and forgot an invitation to a vice-regal function in order to pay his addresses to her ; and it was there that a British staff officer, attached to his suite, begged to be relieved, without delay, of his duties on the ground that, if he were compelled to listen any longer to the Crown Prince's disparaging remarks about England and everything English, he should so far forget himself as to " punch the little bounder's head."

But I am rambling. I want to talk about the news of the war which reached us, and the rumours which we eagerly devoured instead, when news was not to be had. Sometimes the news came to us from Diekirch ; sometimes from Luxemburg. Sometimes a traveller brought it ; sometimes we sent a messenger to fetch it. In the main, I suppose, it was mere coffee-house babble, traceable, at the best, to the supposed indiscretions of German staff officers ; but though most of the coffee-house babble was fantastic, a portion of it was true. We knew not only some things which England did not learn till later, but also some things (though only a few things) about which England is still imperfectly informed. Perhaps, therefore, I shall be able to add a few facts, as well as fantasies, to the common stock.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE KAISER—AND MANY RUMOURS

IT is time to offer my one piece of exclusive information about the course of military events. The story is one which the German censor has carefully hidden from the German people ; and it has also proved to be new to every one to whom I have told it in England. But it fits, like a piece of a Chinese puzzle, into Mr. Buchan's "History of the War" ; so I will introduce it by quoting from Mr. Buchan, who thus pays tribute to certain daring French francs-tireurs :

"In the retreat from the Meuse a body of 400 French riflemen—probably from Langle's Fourth Army—were cut off on the east bank of the river. They had with them a million cartridges, and with this ammunition they managed to reach a sanctuary in the southern hills. There they remained, and speedily became the terror of the German invaders. Led by the country people they waged guerilla warfare upon German detachments, and did enormous execution. With their excellent marksmanship they picked off the enemy at long range, and in spite of a price on their heads and desperate efforts at

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

capture, they lived securely in their mountain fastnesses. Some day, it is to be hoped, a second Michelet will tell the tale of their bold adventure, or a new Dumas weave it into a breathless romance."

If so, there is one chapter in their history on which both historian and novelist will dwell with special gusto : the story which will tell how the valiant band put the Kaiser himself to flight, and came within an ace of killing or capturing him. That is Luxemburg's contribution to the narrative ; and Luxemburg probably has not finished laughing over it to this day.

It happened at the time when the Kaiser and the General Staff were at Luxemburg ; and the former, at any rate, was bitterly dissatisfied with his reception by the populace. He could not understand why the people, always excepting some of the Catholic Clergy, avoided him, when he walked in the streets, as they would have avoided a leper ; and it pained him to find that his portrait was not offered for sale in the stationers' shops. He walked into at least one stationer's shop and remonstrated ; and the young lady behind the counter pretended not to know who he was, and shaped her remarks accordingly, saying that she only stocked goods for which there was a demand. Presently—whether for this reason or for some other—he decided to shift his headquarters to Charleville.

## THE KAISER—AND MANY RUMOURS

He did not slink away quietly, for that is not his style ; at all events it was not his style in the days when he ran Von Moltke instead of being run by Von Falkenhayn. His departure was well advertised, and was attended with imperial pomp and ceremony. He sent a sum of money—a grossly inadequate sum in view of those best qualified to judge—to the municipality, for distribution among the poor, and the only thanks he got for it was the scornful comment :

*“Ce n'est pas beaucoup, mais sans doute il en a plus besoin que nous.”*

He also paid a farewell visit to the Grand Duchess, on whom, as I have shown, he was rather fond of forcing his society, and begged her acceptance of a magnificent bouquet of her own roses. Meanwhile his luxurious apartments had been dismantled, and his numerous portmanteaux and kit-bags had been packed ; and he set out, with his brother Henry, and his Bethmann-Hollweg, and his Tirpitz, and his Von Moltke, and his aides-de-camp, and his secretaries—a magnificent procession of some forty or more gorgeous motors.

Luxemburg heaved a long sigh of relief, believing that it had seen the last of him, at any rate for some time to come ; but when Luxemburg came down to breakfast the next morning, it discovered, to its amazement, that he was still there—or, rather, that he had returned, in the

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

small hours of the morning, when all respectable citizens were in bed. But he had by no means returned in the condition in which he set out. He had left a good many little things behind him—a good deal of baggage, a good many cars, and a good many members of his staff—and the cars were not only caked with mud, but also marked by bullets.

Naturally Luxemburg was inquisitive ; and it was not long before its curiosity was gratified. The Prussian officers were always apt to be indiscreet at the hour of *gemüthlichkeit* in the cafés ; and this was much too good a story for them to keep to themselves. So somebody soon heard from them what had happened. The news of the Kaiser's well-advertised departure had reached the ears of the francs-tireurs ; and they had prepared an ambuscade for him. He had unsuspectingly run into it ; he had been under fire. There had been casualties—killed, wounded and missing ; and it was only by the merest fluke that William's own name had failed to figure in the list. If only he had been taken !

That is the story on which the romantic historians of the future will have to concentrate. We, in Luxemburg, lived on it for many days. Our other military information would have been very interesting if we could have communicated at the time, but is of little interest, and less value now. He knew, for instance—a point on which

## THE KAISER—AND MANY RUMOURS

I find Mr. Buchan speculating—what task had been assigned to the Imperial Guard ; for we had seen it pass through Luxemburg, with the Crown Prince's army, to attack Longwy and Verdun. We knew, too, some time before England did, how large was the German army sweeping through Belgium ; our estimate, based upon information received, coincided almost exactly with the figure which Mr. Buchan gives as the eventual English computation. And we divined the forthcoming attack on the Antwerp forts, from news which reached us through a commercial traveller to the effect that the German Marine Artillery had been seen passing through Malmédy. Decidedly, if we had had aeroplanes, and could have flown on them to the British headquarters, the Intelligence Department would have had reason to welcome us, though it might have been difficult to disengage the truth from the fiction in our stories.

Certainly we did not, ourselves, always effect the disentanglement successfully. We lived in a world of rumours—rumours were the very breath of life to us—and the one solid fact which we had to go upon was that we had more than once detected the German High Command in evasions and suppressions of the truth which might almost be called thumping lies.

Nowadays, Mr. Belloc tells us, their official bulletins are fairly accurate. Like all official

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

bulletins, they have to be discounted ; but the rate of discount is not abnormally high—not so high, for instance, as the rate of discount on the mark. That may be so ; but it certainly was not so at the beginning. Then the important thing was to make the bulletins square, not with the facts of the case, but with the predictions to which the General Staff had committed itself. So the High Command announced that Liège had been taken at a time when, though the town had been rushed, the forts were still vigorously pounding ; and it drew a veil over the sanguinary check at Sedan,—where, according to a soldier's post-card, which had somehow evaded the Censor's eye, the Germans ran out of artillery ammunition, and were, for hours, at the mercy of the French seventy-fives ; and it gave out the result of the battle of the Marne in the following enigmatic sentence :—

“ The news having been brought in by our aeroplane scouts that superior enemy forces were advancing from the West, our right wing has been withdrawn.”

That careful phrasing may have deceived Germany, but it certainly did not deceive Luxembourg. I have a lively recollection of the night on which it was read in the *Luxemburger Zeitung*. The reader had opened the paper with very gloomy anticipations, and a very sombre face. I watched him, not without apprehension. But



## THE KAISER—AND MANY RUMOURS

his expression changed. The frown yielded to a smile, and the smile broadened into a grin. And then came the comment :—

“ Ah ! So the Prussians admit that they’ve been beaten, do they ? ”

And then drinks were called for ; and we toasted the triumph of French and British arms.

It was, as it were, a direct invitation to us to put our faith in rumours ; and, after that, we had more faith in any extravagant legend than in the official news. There arose, in fact, a lively demand for rumours ; and the lively demand created a liberal supply,—most of them relating to the battle of the Marne and the subsequent battle of the Aisne. Von Bülow, we heard, had lost no fewer than 160,000 prisoners, and had surrendered to Private Rousseau of the Belgian Army, whose portrait had appeared in the *Daily Graphic*, or perhaps it was the *Daily Mirror*. Von Kluck had also been captured and shipped from Ostend to England. The latter rumour came from a Belgian refugee of Luxemburg nationality ; the former was traced to a charwoman who had access to the waste-paper basket at the Commandantur.

Another rumour was to the effect that the archives and treasures of the Reichsbank had been removed to Frankfort-on-the-Main, and that the Russians were in Berlin. A man had met a man who had been told by another man

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

that he had read the news in a paper published at Trier. A further rumour assured us that Italy had joined the Allies and had occupied Pola and Trieste. It came to us, linked with the true story of the taking of Lemberg by the Russians, and it was said to come from no less an authority than M. Eyschen himself. But the most circumstantial of all the rumours was that which informed us that the French were on the point of taking Metz. It reached us at a time when the distant thunder of the guns was causing our windows to rattle ; and it was delivered in instalments with the cumulative effect of a sensational serial story. One of our number journeyed daily to Diekirch to fetch a fresh instalment.

The French, we heard on the first day, have taken one of the forts of Metz. And then it was, each day adding its item : The French have taken two of the forts of Metz ; the French have taken three of the forts of Metz ; the French are now bombarding the town of Metz ; the Metz railway station is in flames. It really seemed as if it might be true ; we could think of no other explanation of the cannonade, which never ceased to be audible. People began to lay their plans on the assumption of the truth. Some one said that he proposed to do—I forget exactly what—in three weeks' time.

“ In three weeks' time,” said one of my other

## THE KAISER—AND MANY RUMOURS

friends, " Metz will be a French town, and then I shall be able to go there and collect some money which is due to me."

But then followed the anti-climax. The next day, I met my friend again.

" Well ! How about Metz ? " I asked him.

" There's a commercial traveller here," he replied, " who has just come from Metz to sell apples. He says that everything is quiet there, so I suppose we must have been mistaken."

Undoubtedly we had been ; but when that rumour had gone the way of all rumours, other rumours succeeded it. Luxemburg, like the rest of the world, heard the wonderful rumour about the vast hordes of Russians said to have been shipped from Archangel to Scotland ; and Luxemburg tracked those Russians a good deal further than Scotland, deriving its knowledge of their movements from a source much more romantic than the newspapers. The news actually fell among us from the skies, in the shape of a written message to the citizens of Luxemburg, signed by Captain Aubry, and dropped into the town from an aeroplane.

The military authorities, of course, got hold of the letter, but not before a copy of it had been taken. From that first copy many other copies were made, and these passed freely from hand to hand. One of them was shown to me, and I read a spirited appeal to the Luxemburgers to be of

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

good courage. In a week, or ten days' time, it was promised, they should be delivered from the Prussian yoke. The Russians, from Archangel, together with a strong Canadian contingent, had joined the British Marines at Ostend, were sweeping through Belgium, driving everything before them, and had almost reached Namur. It happened at a time when the German right flank was certainly experiencing pressure from some source, and there was hardly a sceptic to be found in the whole of the Grand Duchy.

"It must be true," the Luxemburgers said. "Captain Aubry is well known in Luxemburg. He certainly would not deceive us."

"Those men on the bridge evidently know," said another speaker. "I was watching their faces to-day. They looked thoroughly scared—like men who had seen ghosts."

"And I was talking, only yesterday," said a third, "to a Prussian friend of mine who is now a Major on the Staff. He told me things were not going too well for Germany. 'Our men,' he said, 'are being driven back in Belgium, and it's no use killing Russians, because the more of them you kill, the more there are.' "

So we were all satisfied ; and one of our number gave a party on the strength of his satisfaction, and regaled us on the first salmon caught that year in the Our, where salmon arrive quite at the end of the season. The confidence in the issue

## THE KAISER—AND MANY RUMOURS

which I had always expressed then found its reward.

“ I used to love you,” a lady of the party said, “ because you were always so sure.”

But we were all sure that afternoon, and we gave each other a proof of it.

“ Suppose we have a sweepstake—entrance fee one mark—the pool to be taken by whoever draws the day on which the guard is withdrawn from Vianden bridge.”

The proposal was carried by acclamation—we chose a treasurer, and paid up, and drew our dates out of our host's straw hat. And that at the time, as we afterwards learnt, when the German Marines were marching through Malmédy to begin the siege of Antwerp. After the fall of that city there was nothing for it but to return the stakes ; and I fear that the lady who had loved me for my certainty came to the conclusion that her feelings had been truant guides, though I am quite sure she will have changed her mind yet again before I get my opportunity of sending her a copy of this book.

And meanwhile, how about that rumour ? Was it a practical joke ? Was it a French ruse designed to throw dust in Prussian eyes ? That is a mystery which will hardly be possible to solve until the war is over. For the present, I can only record the fact that we, in Luxemburg, did get the rumour about those Russians, and got

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

it in the form of a missive bearing a well-known signature, dropped, as it were, from Heaven into our midst.

It was the last rumour which gave us any gratification. After that, things began to look very black ; and only those whose faith was most robust believed that the Prussian Guard would spend itself in vain against the thin khaki line at Ypres.

## CHAPTER X

### CRIMES OF THE GERMAN ARMY

WILL it be believed that, during the whole of my stay at Vianden, I never once heard a German speak of his enemies as "pig-dogs," or a Luxemburger refer to the Germans as the "Boches?" The fact is a noteworthy proof of the remoteness of our village, even when the guns boomed within earshot, from the palpitating heart of the struggle. Similarly, it was almost an exciting event when I heard the word "Kultur."

The man who used it might, even now, get into trouble if I furnished any clue to his identity, so I will merely say that he was a nervous gentleman, rather more than middle-aged, who excused himself for doing business with Germans by quoting this maxim: *Le meilleur moyen de faire la guerre à votre ennemi est de lui prendre tout l'argent qu'il a.* He spoke at the time when the Belgian offensive, based upon Antwerp, was causing the Germans some embarrassment, and inspiring us with those fleeting hopes which found expression in our sweepstake; and his puffy eyes bulged over

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

the beer bottles as he told us what would happen if the Germans came back through the Grand Duchy as beaten and demoralised men. They would rob, and rape and burn, he said, avenging their discomfiture alike on animate and inanimate things ; there would be nothing for us to do but to sell our lives as dearly as we could, though we should probably end by perishing in the flames. Then, having finished, he rose and rolled away, looking something like an agitated beer barrel, and being, beyond question, very full of beer ; and he flung us, as a parting salutation, the fierce words :

“ *Deutsche Kultur.* ”

This in the presence of ladies, to whom it became necessary to denounce him as a scared old woman who had had too much to drink. *In vino veritas*, however. No less an authority than Von Bissing, the murderer of Edith Cavell, has spoken of German work in Belgium as Germany's *Kulturaufgabe* ; and Luxemburg had no need to await the Report of the Bryce Commission in order to know what that work had been like. Luxemburg, indeed, was, rather, in the position of members of that Commission, listening to the evidence of witnesses who poured out their unceasing stream of depositions, before, during, and after the Reign of Terror.

Some of them were so dumbfounded by the sights which they had seen that they could



## CRIMES OF THE GERMAN ARMY

hardly be got to talk. That was the case with a Luxemburg student at the University of Liège, who had spent several days and nights in a cellar, seeking shelter from the shells, and with a Luxemburg brewer who had lost his brewery, and very nearly lost his life, at Louvain. The latter sat, for hours, in silent gloom, on the hotel verandah, with his head buried in his hands; and one felt, when he looked up, that his optic nerve would have to atrophy before the image of the horrors which he had seen would be effaced from his retina. And that, be it noted, was an experience which some even of the Germans who had perpetrated the atrocities did not escape. I heard of such a case at Ruhleben; the case of an officer connected by marriage with one of my friends in the Camp.

This man confessed; and it was clear from his confession that he was one of the weaker vessels, not really fit for that *Kulturaufgabe* of which Von Bissing boasts. There had been firing, he said, from a cabaret in one of the Belgian villages through which he passed. He and his men had then shot, without enquiry, not only all the persons inside the cabaret, but also several obviously innocent persons who were drinking beer outside it. Next, to make assurance doubly sure, they had run upstairs and broken into the bedrooms. They had found two servant girls there; and his men had

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

bayoneted them before his eyes. That was the scene which lingered with him, and haunted him. He trembled like an aspen when he spoke :

“ It stays ; it stays. When I think it has gone, it comes back. I hear their awful shrieks,—I see them writhing. I cannot sleep for thinking of it ; and when I do sleep it is only to dream of it. Oh, it is awful,—awful—awful ! ”

There must have been many other cases of the kind ; indeed, the captured German Diaries have furnished scores. Not all Germans are barbarians with a veneer of civilisation ; some of them are civilised men with a veneer of barbarism. The trouble is that, as the Bryce Commission proved, the barbarism, whether latent or superimposed, is not only encouraged, but organised and directed scientifically, by the German High Command. So that Germany, though not yet a civilised country, is nevertheless a country which it may be fairly easy to civilise. It is merely a question of picking out the right men and hanging them. The mass of the German people would be more likely to thank the executioner for doing them a good turn, than to make any embarrassing demonstration at the funeral.

But that is a digression. It is of the Luxemburg point of view of the Belgian crimes that I wish to speak ; and Luxemburg neither looked far beyond them nor philosophised deeply about

## CRIMES OF THE GERMAN ARMY

them. It had no newspapers except those passed by the German Censor ; and the great flood of fugitives did not enter the Grand Duchy. The Germans were always able to tell their version of any story first ; and contradictions and the supplementary details only arrived later, in instalments. Indignation, therefore, was never artificially fired by rhetoric, but spread, slowly and surely, like a smouldering flame. German "frightfulness" may have been denounced more furiously in other countries ; but nowhere else has it been condemned more definitely and sincerely.

Things might, though I hardly think they would, have been different, if the effect of German special pleading had not been spoiled by German arrogance ; but then it was so spoiled. The Germans might end by denying some of their crimes, and excusing others ; but they always began by boasting of them. It was so in the case of Liège, and it was so again in the case of Louvain.

Germany, we have been told, over and over again, is not pursuing any *Eroberungspolitik*—any policy of stealing other people's property or territory ; but that was not what the German newspapers wrote on the days following the fall of Liège. The argument was then that Liège was due to Germany as a reward for Germany's trouble in taking it,—a price which the Belgians must be called upon to pay for

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

shedding German blood. I well recall the arrogant climax of the leader in, I think it was, the *Frankfurter Zeitung*: *Luttich ist nunmehr Deutsch, und Luttich muss Deutsch bleiben.*

Germany, we have also been frequently told, did only the unavoidable minimum of damage at Louvain, and did it with a heavy heart. The Kaiser had said so; Bethmann-Hollweg has said so; the ninety-three professors have said so. But what did the German papers write at the time? That it had been properly decided that Louvain must "cease to exist as a centre of art and culture" on account of its unfriendly reception of the most polite invaders whom the world had ever seen. And what did General von Dittfurth say to the interviewer sent to him by *Der Tag*? That loud-mouthed warrior is worth quoting.

"We are not responsible to the rest of the world, and owe it no explanations. We have nothing to justify, nothing to defend, nothing to excuse. All that our men do in order to defeat the enemy and win the victory for our flag is justified, or must be regarded as justified. We need not trouble our heads about the opinions of foreigners, neutral or otherwise; and if all the monuments between our lines and those of the enemy are reduced to dust, we shall have plenty of time to lament their loss after peace has been signed.

## CRIMES OF THE GERMAN ARMY

“ To-day, it would be idle to waste words on the subject. To-day Mars and not Apollo is the master of our destinies. The clod of earth which lies over the body of one of our gallant men is worth more to us than all the cathedrals and all the artistic treasures in the world. If they call us barbarians it does not matter. We do not care ; we laugh at the accusation.”

Thus did the wild beast roar ; and when he afterwards tried to coo like a plausible turtle-dove, the recollection of the roaring spoilt the effect, and spoilt it, perhaps, more signally in Luxemburg than in most countries. There was no question there of the exaggerations of the sensational press—the Press was not allowed to be sensational ; but the fresh facts which came daily to our knowledge formed, as it were, a running commentary on the belated claim of the Germans that they were behaving like gentlemen in Belgium. The Luxemburgers not only believed that the Germans were murderers—they knew the names of particular people whom they had murdered. They not only believed that the Germans were thieves—they had seen the stolen goods.

German officers who had been in Belgium and the North of France passed through Luxemburg on their way back to Germany, and many Luxemburgers had fleeting glances at the contents of their kit-bags. Though they were not a

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

martial people, they knew that such articles as ladies' gold watches and watch chains, ladies' sets of furs, silver salt-cellars, silver candlesticks, and embroidered altar-cloths, formed no part of the ordinary equipment of officers on active service. Nor were they convinced by German protestations of honesty when they saw German officers changing French and Belgian bank notes in the Luxemburg cafés.

"They needn't tell us," they said scornfully, "that the Belgians have been distributing thousand franc notes among them as tokens of gratitude and affection. We know perfectly well that they've been through the tills in the Belgian shops"; and they produced, and chuckled over, copies of the little phrase-book which all the German soldiers carried about with them.

It was a compilation of short sentences for every-day use in German, French, English, Russian, and Serbian. It instructed soldiers how to express themselves when demanding any sort of requisition from oats to cigars, or when threatening to hang the curé or shoot the burgo-master; but the sentence which most completely illuminated the dark German soul was this:

"*Wo ist die Kasse?*"

"*Où est la caisse?*"

"Where do you keep your money?"

German officers who had that phrase-book

## CRIMES OF THE GERMAN ARMY

in their pockets and Belgian bank notes in their hands might plausibly be presumed to be no better than vulgar thieves\*; and the proofs required to elevate presumption to certainty were frequently forthcoming. A fresh proof was laid before me, only the other day.

The victim, in this case, was a Belgian lady residing in one of the provincial towns. When the war began, she laid in a considerable stock of provisions; when the invaders came dangerously near, she fled, with her brother, to England. Her brother afterwards returned to Belgium, to attend to his business in those "better days" promised in lying German invitations. Correspondence was difficult; but his report of what had happened in his absence did eventually reach his sister. The house had been cleared, during his stay in England, of every valuable which could easily be removed. Not only the provisions were gone. The plate and linen had also been taken; and the wardrobe had been plundered.

When such things happen, it is obviously unsafe to trust any German officer any further than one sees him. His uniform, far from being a guarantee that his conduct will be honourable, affords, rather, a presumption that he will be unable to keep his hands from picking and stealing

\* Prince Eitel Friederich will probably be placed in the dock, after the war, on a charge of theft. There seems to be conclusive evidence that he stole women's underclothing from a country house.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

and should operate as a warning to lock up the spoons. But I will not insist,—so many competent judges have already insisted. The stories of theft \* were not, after all, the stories which moved the Luxemburgers most. They were more affected by the misery which German crimes had brought upon little children.

“Think of it!” said one of my friends. “They have terrorised the country so that little tots of six or seven throw up their hands and scream for mercy when they see the Germans coming.”

“Yes,” said another, “and all the roads are crowded with little children wandering about, crying for their mothers; and no one can find out who they are, or whom they belong to.”

That fact, it seems, got into the German papers, and moved even the German women—or some of them.

For the attitude of German women in this war has been wonderfully various. I have seen a letter in which a German lady expressed her heart-felt joy at having read, in one of the newspapers, that the civil prisoners at Ruhleben were only to be given just enough food to keep body and soul together; and I have also heard of a German gaoler’s wife who cried for her English prisoners and protested that it was a scandalous shame that they should be treated so badly. I

\* From Malines alone seven hundred pianos were stolen.



## CRIMES OF THE GERMAN ARMY

have heard of German women who have giped at the prisoners behind their barbed wire ; and I have also heard of German women who have braved disfavour, and even punishment, from Von Bissing, by offering those prisoners chocolates and cigarettes.\*

Decidedly—I freely admit it, and am glad to be able to do so—they are not all tarred with the Prussian militarist brush ; and there were some who showed that they were not tarred with it at the time of the barbarities in Belgium. Their letters were printed in some of the German papers. The poor children ! How terrible for them ! Whatever had happened was no fault of theirs ! Could not something be done for them ? And woman after woman proposed to repair the crimes of German men by adopting a Belgian orphan !

It was a well-meant offer. One would like to record it without insisting upon the irony of the situation ; but that is hardly possible. Irony, like truth, “ will out ” ; and we have here just one of those themes which such a writer as Maupassant would have immortalised. He would have shown us the German matron’s heart full of benevolence expanding towards affection, and the little orphan’s heart, sullen, bitter, and unforgiving, nursing his grievance in spite of the kindness shown to him, secretly brooding over

\* Von Bissing denounced them in an Order of the Day.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

plans of vengeance to be executed when he was older. And then he would have depicted some trivial incident—the infliction, say, of some unjust punishment for some childish fault—arousing latent sullenness to instant fury ; and he would have shown us, one conjectures, the child slowly thinking out some subtle plan of immediate revenge—stealing matches and petroleum, perhaps, and setting the house on fire at the dead of night, and burning his benefactress in her bed.

It may be that that particular story will never be written. But many stories of the sort—and many stories still deadlier to the good name of Germany—will assuredly flood the world in the years to come ; and the certainty that the blood of the martyrs will thus be the seed not merely of the Church, but of Art and Literature, reveals to us one weakness in the German position of which perhaps neither the Germans themselves nor their enemies perceive the full significance. The Germans, it is true, are very clever people in their way—wonderful chemists, and wonderful mechanics, wonderful organisers, and wonderful commercial travellers ; but their accomplishments in these fields will not help them in the controversies of the future. On the contrary, we shall see them blundering along in a language which no one will take the trouble to learn, while all the art of the world, all the wit

## CRIMES OF THE GERMAN ARMY

and sarcasm of the world, all the clear-cut and polished intellect of the world will be arrayed against them. Kultur, in short, is not only "up against" humanity. It is also "up against" Art; and the apostles of Kultur are destined to find that their enemies command the fields of art as completely as the British Fleet commands the seas.

Of what that means they have already had a little object-lesson in the art and literature arising out of the war of 1870. They discovered then that, though the soldier and the statesman may make history, it is the artist who makes the reputations alike of peoples and of individuals by his power of playing on our sympathies as on an instrument of music. The Germans won the war, annexed the territory, pocketed the money, and went home boasting, to write the history of their achievements; but no one except the professional student ever reads what they have written, and no one, student or not, is ever moved by their monuments as one is moved by the "Quand même" statue in the Belfort market-place. It is the French, not the German, literature of the war which lives and persuades; and it is Detaille's famous picture, "Les Vainqueurs," with the stolen French clocks peeping out from under the tarpaulin of the returning German wagon, which mirrors for the world the German conduct during the invasion.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

Art, in short—taking the world in its widest sense, to include the work of Zola and Maupassant, as well as that of Detaille and the sculptors—has fixed the popular conception of the Germans of 1870 as thieves and murderers, as surely as the art of Carlyle has fixed the popular conception of Robespierre as “sea-green.”

And if these things were done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? If these things happened when Germany had, at least, a *primâ facie* case, and did, at least, come out of the war victorious, what may we expect to happen when Germany, having begun the butchery without provocation, ends a career of crime and arrogance by being hammered to a pulp?

The same thing will happen as before; but it will happen in a far more intense degree, and with far more damning and durable effect. The Germans will protest and howl—there are no people like them for howling and protesting; but they will find—they most clearly are foredoomed to find—that the history of the present war accepted by the world will be a history written by their enemies, from documents which their enemies are even now carefully collecting and collating, illuminated by their enemies' wit, and illustrated by their enemies' paintings, sculptures, and cartoons. By the monuments which will be erected to the memory of Edith Cavell, and those other monuments which are to

## CRIMES OF THE GERMAN ARMY

be set up, with full explanatory inscriptions, wherever a German barbarity has been perpetrated on French soil, the repute of the German race will be damned for generations. And damned, as the artistic work already done shows, so terribly. The Kaiser of popular imagination will always be the Kaiser as pictured by Louis Raemaekers, cowering before the figure of Christ and stammering out his weak excuses ; the German soldiers will go down to posterity as the pigs which Louis Raemaekers depicted devouring Edith Cavell's dead body ; the Iron Cross will be the decoration which Louis Raemaekers appended to those pigs' tails. If there is any eventual recognition of the better qualities of the better men among the German people, they will owe that recognition to the magnanimity of their enemies.

Such is the fate of those who declare war upon ideals. Such is the vengeance which Art will take—and has already begun to take—upon Kultur.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE FELDWEBEL

EVEN in Belgium, I have been told, there were some Germans whose conduct shone like a bright light in a naughty world. Certainly it was so in the Grand Duchy, where little happened, to "rattle" any functionary who was, by nature, easy-going and mild-mannered. Especially was it so at Vianden. Our garrison, there, it must be remembered, was a very, very small one ; and its behaviour bore out the view of Germans which one commonly hears expressed by those who go down to the sea in ships.

My talks with some of the sailors at Ruhleben gave me the clue. When you get a crowd of Germans together, sailors told me, there is no holding them. They are capable of anything except making themselves pleasant. A German, by himself, never gives trouble, and is often quite a decent fellow. Even half a dozen Germans may be all right. Perhaps it was because we hardly ever saw more than half a dozen Germans at once at Vianden, that they fitted themselves into the general life of the village without too much friction, and scarcely seemed

## THE FELDWEBEL

to be of the same flesh and blood as the hordes of savages who were ravaging the country within a few miles of us.

After the Wachtmeister from the crockery-shop had gone to fill a vacancy in the army assailing Verdun, the German with whom we had official relations was the Feldwebel who had lived in Paris. He, as I have said, was a "gentleman Feldwebel," and he behaved accordingly, taking the trouble to assure ladies that there was no sinister significance—*keine Bedeutung*—in his desire to inspect the passes which the Wachtmeister had given them. He had been so long in civil life that he probably felt rather like a fish out of water in a position of military authority; and he certainly seemed much more at his ease when the conversation turned, as it once did, on the *gemüthlichkeit* of Krasnopolsky's restaurant at Amsterdam, than when he had to make disagreeable military communications. He also spoke English rather well, though it was once necessary to fetch the dictionary in order to make it clear to him that neither physical nor moral cowardice was implied by the sentence: "I am afraid I shall be late for dinner." Let it be added that he came from the Rhine Provinces—a region to which it has sometimes been proposed to send the Berlin policemen, in order that they may learn manners—and that a certain young lady at Vianden was making it clear to all the world that

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

she admired him ; in vain, I feel sure, though she did sometimes accompany him on his military rounds, for he was a family man who carried his family portraits about with him, and on occasion, when there were no friends to whom he could show them, submitted them to the inspection of the enemy.

The crisis which enabled us to judge our Feldwebel—a crisis which was bound either to make or mar him in our estimation—occurred when he received orders that all alien enemies, both male and female, must report themselves to him daily. That obligation might easily have been made an intolerable nuisance, as has been discovered by many alien enemies of Germany in many of the German towns ; but our Feldwebel merely said : “ I should like to make this as little disagreeable to you as possible. I am obliged to pass your hotel, on my way to the station, every day, just before your dinner hour. If you would not mind then being visible either at the window or on the verandah, that is all that will be required.”

That, I think, is how an English or a French officer would have behaved in the same circumstances ; and, if the general behaviour of Germans were similar, German philosophers would not have to spend so much of their time on the problem : “ Why are we hated ? ” It was an attitude, at any rate, which served its military purpose without seriously incommoding the stranger, and left



## THE FELDWEBEL

us free to dispose of our time in our own way ; and on the whole Vianden people, as well as strangers, spoke favourably of the Feldwebel, albeit with those reservations which were an inevitable tribute to his nationality.

“ I like him. He seems quite a decent fellow. One musn't trust him, of course. It's never safe to trust a Prussian. Still, for a Prussian, etc . . . ”

That was René Engelmann's verdict ; and the reservations are justified, not by anything that any one knew of the Feldwebel, but by everything that every one knew of the Prussians. Nor would any Prussian, I imagine, resent them, unless he had learnt to do so on his travels ; for untrustworthiness has long been one of the Prussian ideals. Frederick the Great preached it ; Treitschke preached it ; Bernhardi preaches it. The present Kaiser has realised it in action ; and a professor of English at one of the German military schools often explained to me, at Ruhleben, how carefully the rising generation is indoctrinated with it in the class-rooms.

“ It is with them,” he said, “ just as it is with the Jesuits. They are all taught that it is their duty to themselves, their country, their Emperor, and their God, to spy on each other, and tell tales. It is part of *sittlichkeit*—the Prussian equivalent of the Japanese Bushido, and of the “ good form ” of our own public schools. It is so ingrained in them that even the sufferers from the practice

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

do not resent it ; and the boy who gets a good conduct prize for tale-bearing is rather a hero among them than otherwise."

These things being so, I suppose I should get the Feldwebel into trouble with his superiors if I described him as a man who could be trusted ; so the question of his trustworthiness had better, for his own sake, be left open. My latest news about him was that he was still at Vianden, and hoped to stay there till the end of the war ; and that I can believe. He is not the sort of man whom I picture galloping about with a sword in his hand, exhorting his brave troopers to turn the machine guns on the burgomasters, spit the babies, and disembowel the pregnant women. I picture him rather settling down into a groove, stalking from hill to hill on his daily tour of inspection, very grateful to any agreeable young lady who will accompany him, and then returning to slippers ease, red wine, cigars, and as much *gemüthlichkeit* as is attainable in the back parlour of his inn. Anyhow, if that is what he wants, I hope that he will get it ; for it is no fault of his that my journey from Luxemburg to England was broken at Ruhleben, and he never interfered with any of us at Vianden, except on the instructions of higher authority.

Consequently we were free, within the limits which I have indicated, to live our own lives there ; though it is, of course, impossible to live

## THE FELDWEBEL

one's own life, in any full sense of the phrase, when one is cut off from all one's ordinary occupations, and prevented from communicating with one's friends. Our position, in some respects, was rather like that of the patients who submit to the Weir Mitchell Rest cure ; but there were two important differences,—the one to our advantage, and the other to our detriment. It was something to the good that, at any rate, we were under no obligation to lie in bed, over-eat ourselves, and submit to massage in place of exercise. On the other hand, it was unpleasant to have no certainty that our rest cure would end when we were sufficiently rested, and to feel that it might be interrupted, at any moment, by some dramatically disagreeable occurrence.

Each of these apprehensions in turn, was suggested by the news and the rumours. There was a period, after the battle of the Marne, when we expected a quick and decisive victory for French and British arms ; and the results of such a victory might have been more exciting than immediately profitable to us. We should probably have been carried off into captivity ; and if we had not been, we should almost certainly have found ourselves in the line of fire. The suggestion that, in the latter event, we should descend into the hotel cellars and drink the wine was more facetious than practical. A retreating army is seldom in too great a hurry to stop for a

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

drink, though generally in too great a hurry to pay for it ; and it is more likely to look for drink in the cellar than in the conservatory. Some other hiding-place would, in the circumstances, be preferable.

One hiding-place which suggested itself to me was an abandoned copper mine on the banks of the Our. The entrance to it was a hole in the cliff, and it looked like a brigands' cave. Concealed in its recesses, wrapped in our railway rugs, provided with a pocket electric lamp and a sufficient supply of batteries, a loaf of bread, a cheese, a ham, a couple of dozen hard-boiled eggs, some bottled beer and some tobacco, we might, it seemed, keep out of the way for a week or so, while the seventy-fives searched the woods with shrapnel and the high explosives made mince-meat of the trenches, and have emerged in time to present an address of welcome to the victors.

If we had known as much then as we know now, about the German necessities, we certainly should not have thought of a copper mine as a place of retirement likely to escape German observation ; and I do not doubt that the Feldwebel has long since explored its innermost recesses on the off chance that the miners who abandoned it may have been absent-minded men who forgot to carry away the copper. The course of events, however, removed the necessity of any such temporary withdrawal from the scene of strife ; and our

## THE FELDWEBEL

fear, presently, was rather of an indefinite protraction of the unnaturally quiet life which we were leading. Not until quite towards the end of our sojourn, did the question of disappearance once more present itself.

Nor did it then arise out of any particular incident or menace. One had merely a vague feeling that unpleasantness was in the air, and that the position of Englishmen at Vianden was insecure. It was beautiful autumn weather at the time ; a warm blaze of colour shone from the deciduous leaves. The temptation was strong to plunge into the forest, improvise oneself a dwelling there, and live such a life as Thoreau lived at Walden. It would have been no case of flight from duty or responsibility ; for we were already shut off from all that sort of thing by the iron and concrete curtain of the trenches. It seemed, rather, if one let the thought carry one away, an opportunity thrust upon one of spiritual self-realisation through close communion with nature. One recalled the cases of men who had thus employed their time, some of set purpose, and others of necessity, while historic cataclysms were uprooting the material and moral foundations of the world.

There was Thoreau whom I have mentioned. There was Chateaubriand, who roamed among Indians on the banks of the Hudson, at the time when the guillotine was shearing off the heads of priests and kings. There was Senancour, who, at

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

the same time, shut himself up in a *châlet* in the High Alps of the Valais, above Saint Maurice. There was Vaughan the Silurist, who pondered and wrote poetry in the wilds of Wales, at the time when Cromwell was organising the New Model to withstand the drunken troopers who rode with Rupert of the Rhine. There was the Russian saint, who made a vow of silence, and kept it, in spite of the burning of Moscow, all through the long years of the Napoleonic wars.

Whether the Russian saint in the end broke silence with any notable utterance, I do not know. The others did ; and the utterances of most of them were not only notable, but immortal. Mere action might have left them commonplace, whereas meditation made them unique. "Dear beauteous death, the jewel of the just," could never have been written by a man who had spent the years of war in throwing, or even in making, hand grenades. Obermann would never have issued from the wilderness if Senancour had not retired to it. Chateaubriand would never have been able to picture his life so convincingly as the pageant of dream after dream, if the fabric of his vision had not rested on the basis of one real spiritual experience. And though such dreamers may not be the men who serve the world most usefully amid the clash of arms, still they do serve it, and the world is, in the end, grateful for the service.

## THE FELDWEBEL

Such memories were bound to recur, and such thoughts were bound to come, at a time when all the paths to activity were barred, and trouble was always threatening, but never coming, and the autumn leaves were warm and mellow. At all events, they were bound to come to a man whom the war had trapped in the middle of his literary occupation; and so they came.

Some of my friends have thought it strange that I did not go on with the work on which I was engaged just as if nothing had happened. Since I was unmolested, they argue, I might as well have put in the time in that way as in any other. Men used to say that sort of thing to me at Ruhleben. Even the oculist whom I had to consult at Ruhleben said something of the sort, adding, for my encouragement, that I should certainly live to see the fruits of my labours, as the war would soon be over!

*Dieser ist nicht der dreissigjahriger krieg.*

Friends at home, too, have offered the same comment on my idleness; and I am not sure that all of them even yet appreciate the reasons which kept me idle.

One reason, indeed, is obvious, when pointed out, to everybody. Notes and manuscripts are rather dangerous things to have about one in war time. However innocent, in a military sense, they may be, they are always liable to be misunderstood, and the author is never likely to get the



## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

benefit of any doubt which arises as to their proper interpretation. Nor would one have been safe in trying to get them franked as harmless by a Feldwebel who imagined that the man who said he was afraid he might be late for dinner was confessing himself a coward. There might be other gaps in that Feldwebel's knowledge of English idioms ; and he might be too busy to look up all the unfamiliar words in the dictionary. Consequently, even if I managed to get to England, it was very doubtful whether my book, whatever it might be, would accompany me ; and the sense that one may be writing for the waste-paper basket is always paralysing.

Moreover, even if one could see one's way through that difficulty, one came up against another. Here was the world, including the reading-public, in the melting-pot. In what mood it would emerge from this ordeal by fire one did not know ; one only knew that it would surely emerge from it with a new scale of values and a new sense of proportion and perspective. As the times changed, the writer would have to change with them, on pain of finding himself left a ludicrous relic of an antiquated past ; and here, in this placid backwater of the war, one was tied down to trivial interests, and robbed most cruelly of all those emotions which belonged to the great time we were passing through. One had just enough of them to provoke and irritate,



## THE FELDWEBEL

but not enough to teach—or so it seemed at the time. It was impossible to write in such conditions. Would it not be better to cut oneself altogether loose from excitements on which one could get no proper hold, foreswear the prattle of the village street, and see how the mind would work when such things ceased to tantalise it?

Those reflections, of course, were only the product of a mood,—the outcome of an afternoon's walk in the woods, at a time when they were still and warm and ablaze with autumn tints; but my companion showed me a spot, in which, if anywhere, a hermit might hope to make himself an unmolested habitation. It was not the copper mine of which I have spoken, but a tiny clearing in a tangled forest, attained by an almost imperceptible track through an apparently impenetrable undergrowth: a place, one would say:

“Where no one comes,  
Or hath come since the making of the world.”

‘You'd be all right here,’ said my friend, “They might search for weeks, but they'd never find you. And, as you see, there's a supply of water.”

It looked very tempting. One thought of the Forest Lovers, and of the exiled Duke and his companions in “As you Like It.” Here, it seemed, one could comfortably dream the hours

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

away, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot." One abandons oneself as readily to such ideas when the sun is shining as when the band is playing ; but one loses them again as quickly, when the clouds cross the sun, or when the music stops. It was as though music had stopped abruptly when my friend continued :

"In winter, I'm afraid, you'd have too much water. The winter climate at Vianden is very wet, and misty, and clammy."

It was a discordant note ; but no doubt my friend did well to strike it. For, after all, comfort counts, for the recluse as well as the voluptuary. No man can meditate profitably when he is wet and cold. In that plight, he is bound to think far more of things temporal than of things eternal ; and that would have been the inevitable outcome of any endeavour to establish a hermitage in the Vianden forest. The hermit would have found himself, in the end, no better off than the passenger who travels third-class in January, in an unheated train, without either a railway rug or a foot-warmer. He would have spent most of his time in regretting the flesh-pots of the Hotel Ensich, and the friendly confidences of the village barber, and in envying the Feldwebel the *gemüthlichkeit* which he had contrived in his cosy sitting-room.

So the scales fell from my eyes. I perceived that that what had looked like a return to nature

## THE FELDWEBEL

would really have been a resort to artifice—artifice which, for the lack of appliances, would have been foredoomed to failure. The real return to nature was the return to the village street—its simple sociabilities and its unceasing gossip.

## CHAPTER XII

### CLERICALS AND THE POPE

“SIR,” said Dr Johnson, “when you have seen one green field, you have seen all green fields. Let us take a walk up Cheapside.”

No saying could be more untrue ; yet there are few sayings which receive more practical approval from human conduct. Inevitably there was a lure in the sentiment for those to whom only the green fields with a three kilometre radius were open. One very soon got to know all those green fields by heart. Some of them I explored alone ; some in the company of my landlord and other friends. It is a cañon country—a plateau furrowed by deep valleys—most of the slopes wooded from base to crest. There are wonderful terraced walks half-way up the slopes, commanding varying views of constant beauty. One can pick not only blackberries, but also walnuts, as one walks along. It was while gathering these free fruits of the earth—they were free then though I believe there is now a “maximum price” for walnuts, if not for blackberries, that I also gathered most of my knowledge of the Luxemburg people, and their point of view.

## CLERICALS AND THE POPE

The hour for rumours was later, when the train came in from Diekirch, bringing our two censored newspapers and the special commissioners who had collected the coffee-house babble for us. Then, if the weather was fine, we went to the station to meet them; and the Feldwebel, who also had business there, and was a man who walked fast and silently, must often have been surprised by the scraps of talk he heard when he overtook and passed us.

“The information is very good to-night. The Crown Prince’s army is being decimated by dysentery as the result of living on beetroot and mangold wurzels. The Prussians complain that the French are better armed than they are—the *moulin-à-café* is a terror to them. Forty thousand Bavarians have gone over to the enemy, bag and baggage.”

In whatever language these things were said, the Feldwebel could have understood them if he had troubled to listen; but he was a man of sense. He flashed by, like a grey ghost in the twilight, taking no notice of remarks which were not addressed to him, going where *gemüthlichkeit* awaited him, while we talked tactics and strategy to our hearts’ content. It may be that our conclusions were as sound as our premisses; but that I fear, is not saying much.

In the morning, however, there were no rumours to provoke romantic speculation; and our talk then

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

ranged over the safer field of history, and politics, sociology, and comparative institutions. In so far as it dealt with what may be called "the nature of the beast" I have already reported as much of it as matters; but it also dealt with many other things, and added many new facts to my stock of knowledge. I learnt, for instance, that the first Hohenzollern Elector had actually received his electoral hat from a Luxemburg Emperor; and we agreed that, if the present head of the House of Hohenzollern could be required to surrender his imperial dignities to the Grand Duchess whom he had flouted so insolently, the claims of poetical justice would be satisfied. And then I heard a new view—I fancy it must be the Social Democratic view—of the part played by the head of the House of Hohenzollern in the great popular rising of 1813.

"The popular histories tell us that 'the King called and all came,' but when we look at the facts we find that that was not at all what happened. What really happened was that 'all called and the King came.'"

"A Hohenzollern never keeps his word," was another generalisation of those morning walks; and there was no one to deny that this, at least, was one of the particulars in regard to which the laurels of Frederick the Great had not suffered William II. to sleep.

Then, unless it was at some other time, the

## CLERICALS AND THE POPE

talk turned upon the internal affairs of Luxemburg. The Grand Duchy, I gathered, had been grappling very earnestly with social problems, making its own experiments to see how much the State could do for the people, with the result that none were cursed with poverty and few were overwhelmed with riches, and that the occupation was working untold evil by its interruption of that work.

“ And your Parties ? ” I asked. “ Your burning questions ? ”

My friend, whose mouth was full of walnuts, stretched out his hands, with a prophet's gesture, over the valley, and answered, quoting Gambetta :

“ *Le cléricalisme, voilà l'ennemi.* ”

He spoke as an anti-clerical, and, when he had finished his walnuts, he had a great deal to say. A great deal of what he said was quite irrelevant to any theme with which I am here concerned ; but the links which he pointed out between clericalism and pro-Germanism were interesting.

“ The only Germans,” he said, “ who attend the military concerts which the Germans are giving in Luxemburg are the *curés*. ”

He evidently would have had more respect for a priest who was a notorious evil-liver than for one who listened to a German band ; and I agree that there is a good deal to be said for this distribution of esteem.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

The Prussians are the Jesuits of Protestantism. Treitschke's doctrines are a link between the teaching of Hegel and the teaching of Ignatius Loyola. The State is the Prussian's Church, just as the Church is the Jesuit's State. Just as the Jesuits hold that faith need not be kept with heretics, so do the Prussians hold that faith need not be kept with friends. As for the Kaiser, with the word of God in his mouth, and a two-edged sword in his hand. . . .

Well, the Kaiser has been analysed often enough ; one need not trouble to go over that ground again, or, at any rate, one need only go over a very little of it. One might say that he is of the fanaticism of all his allies, and of the religion of none ; or one might describe him as the man who, in the language of commerce, " travels " in religion—the bagman, as it were, of all the creeds in turn, always ready to take up and push a new religious " line." He has travelled for the Padishah, and he has also travelled for the Pope ; and from both spiritual potentates alike he expects his little commission. A curious figure surely ; the Christian champion of Islam ; the Lutheran champion of Catholicism.

It was only in the latter character, however, that we examined him in the course of that interesting morning's walk ; and we did not, in doing so, forget Bismarck and the Kulturkampf, or fail to criticise the equivocal attitude of Benedict XIV., though the interesting developments



## CLERICALS AND THE POPE

of the latter branch of our subject had not then got very far.

"Bismarck," my friend reminded me, "said he would never go to Canossa ; but he went."

"And no doubt," I interposed, "going to Canossa is, from the Pope's point of view, more important than coming to the cross."

"There is no doubt whatever about that. But now observe a difference. Bismarck went to Canossa in a white sheet, and hurried home again. William II. has gone there in full uniform, with the band playing. He has regarded Canossa not as a place of pilgrimage for penitents, but as a sphere of influence for Prussians."

"And was the Pope glad to see him there ?"

"Not altogether, perhaps, but still not sorry. There was such a wave of anti-clericalism passing over the world, and the poor Pope was hanging on to his dignity by the eyelids, and so you see . . ."

The line of argument was clear. Almost everywhere in the Catholic world the State had been at loggerheads with the Church. Clerical big-wigs had felt aggrieved by the dissolution or expulsion of the religious orders ; encyclicals, sermons, and the rest of the machinery of ecclesiastical persuasion, had stirred the minds of—I will not say the superstitious—but of many unreflecting persons of simple piety. There was a sentiment there to be exploited ; and the Kaiser laid himself out to exploit it in the interest of the

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

Prussian military clique, and the ambitious Pangermanist Party.

"I do not know about this Pope," said my friend, "but I have my doubts about him."

Benedict XIV., indeed, had then worn the tiara for too short a time for doubt as to his attitude to have given place to conviction. His attitude towards the parties was as yet imperfectly defined ; one did not yet know whether to regard him as a cautious, simple-minded prelate, or as a deep diplomatist. It may be, indeed, that even now, the material for a final judgment is incomplete ; but judgment is nevertheless being passed, and it is not an enthusiastic judgment. At the best, Benedict XIV. seems to have yielded weakly to imperial suggestion. At the worst . . . but it will be enough to present the facts and leave them to characterise themselves.

Perhaps the fact which has most impressed the world, Catholic as well as Protestant, is Benedict XIV.'s resolute refusal to be "drawn" on the subject of the Louvain massacre. Whatever had happened at Louvain, he is alleged to have said, had happened during the Pontificate of his predecessor ; with that *beau geste*, as he seemed to think it, he waved the questioners aside. The utterance was assuredly more suggestive of the diplomat than of the Vicar of Christ, and was, indeed, not a little suggestive of the attitude of Pontius Pilate towards the crucifixion.

## CLERICALS AND THE POPE

One felt that it lacked moral grandeur, and that the man who spoke thus either would not, or could not, understand, that humanity and civilisation were the stakes at issue in the struggle.

That was the first impression ; and there has been little in Benedict XIV.'s subsequent proceedings to counteract it. His intercession has, it is true, secured the exchange of a certain number of prisoners of war ; but though that is something to the good, it is less than one might have expected, and by no means enough to remove the feeling that his Holiness walks rather too warily for one who aspires to be a great moral force. One remarks, indeed, a perfectly wonderful wariness in his prayers for peace. They read like the supplications of a man who prays "without prejudice" and is terribly afraid lest his orisons should give one of the belligerents an unfair advantage over the other. Fierce indignation at foul deeds is conspicuously absent from them ; they suggest rather the attitude of the nurse who finds children quarrelling, takes for granted that no question of importance is at issue between them, and tells them to kiss and be friends. And this not only after the Belgian massacres which His Holiness has brushed aside as Pius X.'s business, but also after the torpedoing of the *Lusitania*, which occurred while he was himself the tenant of the Papal See !

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

What is the meaning of it ?

His Holiness will perhaps claim that the matter is one between himself and his conscience; but a Pope who prays tendenciously in public cannot expect to escape criticism. People who read Benedict XIV.'s prayers in the public Press inevitably read them in connection with other items of news; and there are two items of news which appear to have a particular bearing upon them. One is the intimation that the War has exposed the occupants of the Vatican to inconvenience; the other is the talk in the German newspapers of a possible dismemberment of Italy, entailing, as one of its possible consequences, the restoration of the Pope's temporal power. One can imagine a virulent anti-clerical putting all these facts together and ending a denunciation of the great betrayal of humanity with the claim that he had caught Benedict XIV. with thirty pieces of silver in his pocket.

That, however, would be exaggerated, and exaggeration is better avoided. Still, even the vision which the facts conjure up before impartial eyes is not one quite compatible with the conception which one would like to have of Pope's sacred office. What one sees is, as it were, a Benedict-Blondin performing devotional exercises on the tight-rope; and one has the further feeling, in the presence of the spectacle, that, while Blondin might very well have been glad to look like

## CLERICALS AND THE POPE

Benedict, Benedict ought by no means to be satisfied to look like Blondin. And that means, of course, that the Kaiser's policy of exploiting the Pope in the interest of Prussia has not been altogether unsuccessful; and that the image of a Pope so exploited strikes the anti-clericals as a tragic comedy, and cannot be quite gratifying even to sincere Catholics.

One can, of course, understand the temptation. Austria, though not the eldest, is the most dutiful daughter of the Church; and the German Empire is one of the few countries in which the fiscal principle still prevails that people must pay for the upkeep of religious machinery, whether they make use of it or not. The charity which heads a subscription list naturally evokes the charity which thinks no evil. There is a great deal of human nature in Popes; and, human nature being what it is, one can easily picture Benedict XIV. taking a leaf out of the book of Nelson, putting his spiritual telescope to his blind eye, and declaring that, though he had heard some talk of atrocities, he could not see any. He may further have been prompted to the act by the feeling, natural to one holding his office, that religious toleration is a virtue in Protestants, though a vice in Catholics.

The fact is clear, at any rate, that Benedict XIV. has, to some extent, allowed himself to be exploited, and it generally happens that, when the Pope is

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

exploited, the priests and the devout laity are exploited too. The presence of the Luxemburg priests at the German military concerts indicates that this process of exploitation did begin in the Grand Duchy; but it soon ceased there, while, in the belligerent countries, it made no headway whatsoever. Why? Were not the Luxemburgers—were not the Belgians—religious, and even superstitious? I asked the question.

“Of course they are,” my friend replied. “Have you not seen? Do you not see, every day?”

## CHAPTER XIII

### DISCUSSING THE FUTURE

OF course I had seen—of course I saw, every day,—that the Luxemburgers were a superstitious people. My own particular friends were, indeed, sufficiently emancipated; but the sounds of superstition were in the air, and the spectacle of superstition was all around us. I do not refer to the young lady who told every one that she was saying a *neuvaine* for the success of the German arms, for she was the young lady who was obviously lost in admiration of our highly respectable Feldwebel; there were many far more significant indications.

One morning, for instance, at the very beginning of the war, I was aroused from my sleep by a sound which suggested the cackling of geese or the quacking of ducks. It seemed unlikely that either ducks or geese were actually demonstrating in the village street, so I went to the window, drew the curtain, and looked out. A procession of school girls was passing, flanked by nuns; and they were all reciting prayers at the tops of their voices as they walked. There was no suggestion—no illusion even—of spontaneity in the performance.

## IN LUXEBURG IN WAR TIME

It was as if a religious leader turned a handle, and supplications were ground out by machinery ; and it is only in priest-ridden regions that ritual thus degenerates into mere incantation.

Very similar evidence met one on the road to the Bildchen— a wayside chapel in which is kept an image of the Virgin to which a legend attaches. Once or twice, in the course of the year, this image is carried from the Chapel to the village Church, and back again ; and practically the whole population of the village, including the village band, turns out to take part in that ceremony, singing hymns as it goes, and reminding one of those early mountaineers who set out to climb Roche Melon, carrying banners, and chanting *Vexilla regis prodeunt*. Moreover you may, at any time, if the weather is tolerable, meet praying pilgrims on the Bildchen Road ; and there is no mistaking them for people out for an ordinary walk. They shuffle along with drooped eyelids, muttering as they go ; and they pause in front of the carved representations of the stations of the cross, and recite a special prayer at each halting-place. The war seemed to drive them in swarms along the road, like a compelling natural force.

The war also drove them, in larger numbers than usual, to Church ; and there were many signs that the preacher's words weighed with them. It did not, indeed, appear to me that the



## DISCUSSING THE FUTURE

preacher whom I heard had very much to say. He was merely, so far as I could gather, reminding the congregation that they lived in serious times, and that any moment might be their next— facts which, though indubitably important, were, in the circumstances, reasonably obvious ; but perhaps the fact that, when we got outside, we could hear the guns booming made a difference. At all events my anti-clerical friends thought so, and said that it was a shame of the preacher to frighten people who were already far too timorous.

But that is not the point. The point is that, if the Kaiser and his advisers wanted to exploit superstition, here, in Vianden, was plenty of superstition to be exploited ; and yet it was quite obvious that the attempt at exploitation had been a failure. The *curés*, in spite of the habit of listening to the German band, had been less responsive than the Pope, and the masses had been less responsive than the *curés*.

“ There *were* *curés*,” said my friend, “ who wanted to make out that the war was God’s punishment of the French for turning out monks and nuns ; but they could not go on saying that when they saw that most of the punishment fell on the heads of the poor Belgians who had welcomed those monks and nuns.”

Obviously they could not ; obviously the brutality of the Kaiser’s soldiers had undone the

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

work accomplished by the cunning of the Kaiser's theologians.

Even in Belgium, it seems, a few *curés* had tried, by their sermons, to prepare the way for the coming of the Kaiser's armies, after the manner of intriguing German missionaries in China ; but the mob had soon made them sorry that they had spoken. Moreover those who spoke in that sense were only an insignificant minority. The masses even of the priests had been swept off their feet by the general enthusiasm, and presented the appearance, if one contrasted their attitude with that of the Pope, of an anti-clerical clergy. My friend offered two explanations :

" You see," he said, " a Pope is a man without a country ; but a *curé* has a country."

He paused, and then he added :

" You see, too, there was no chance that the Germans would shoot the Pope, whereas they go about shooting *curés*, all the time."

Those two facts constitute, I think, the key to any puzzle that exists. The Church may be international, but the priesthood is always national, and would have no hold on the people if it were not. The priesthood may give trouble, and even appear to be unpatriotic, in the interest of the Church, in time of peace ; but when the foreigner comes intruding, it finds that patriotism is in its fibre, after all. It was so in England, in the days of the Armada, blessed by a Pope, but scat-

## DISCUSSING THE FUTURE

tered by Catholic as well as Protestant sailors. It was so in Spain, when the priests became the guerilla allies of Protestant England against Catholic France. It has proved to be so in anti-clerical France, where all the priests of military age are now serving in the ranks and doing valiantly. And it is so, to get back to the point from which we started, in Belgium.

In Belgium, indeed, two important things have happened ; the clerical political leaders have been discredited ; the clerical rank and file have been converted—not completely, perhaps, in the religious sense of the word, but quite sufficiently for all practical political purposes. So I was assured by a retired Belgian officer, who regaled me, one afternoon, with his best Belgian bottled beer. The neglect of the Belgian defences, he assured me, had been entirely due to the obstinacy of the clerical majority ; their opponents had in vain urged reform and reorganisation.

“ And now,” he concluded, “ the prediction is coming true : the prediction which Paul Janson uttered when he stood up in the Chamber of Representatives, and pointed to Woeste, saying : ‘ Mark my words ! There sits the man who is leading Belgium to her ruin.’ But never again ! Never again ! ”

Just the same view was prevalent among the Englishmen from Belgium whom I afterwards met at Ruhleben, or, at all events, among those

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

of them who had been long resident in the country.

“ It is quite true,” one of my friends told me, “ that there were, at first, pro-Germans among the clericals, and there is still a very strong feeling against them. Generations will pass before there will again be a clerical Government in Belgium. The King himself, popular as he is, couldn’t stand up against the feeling. But he won’t want to, nor will the *curés*. A *curé* doesn’t like being shot, any more than the rest of us, and he doesn’t believe that true religion is on the side of the men who shoot him ; and the German have shot a devil of a lot of *curés* in Belgium.”

Weighing these facts, one may venture to forecast some of the consequences of this great war in the religious world. It seems, from all that one hears, to be strengthening the hold of Catholicism in places where that hold was weak, and weakening it where it was strong ; but in both places alike, it is undermining the power of clericalism. The anti-clericals have learnt to respect the Catholics because they have seen them quitting themselves like men ; but the Catholics have begun to have their doubts about the Pope, because they have seen him quitting himself like an old woman. In the end, therefore, either there must be a new Pope, or else there will be a new kind of Catholicism.

Luxemburg, it may be, would never have

## DISCUSSING THE FUTURE

come to that conclusion by itself ; but it will come to it in the train of Belgium. It is a case, in short, of : What Belgium thinks to-day Luxemburg will think to-morrow. Luxemburg feels that only accident has saved it from the fate of Belgium ; a Luxemburg citizen has been sent to a German prison for exposing German atrocities in Belgium ; and Belgium is the one of the countries bordering on Luxemburg with which the Luxemburgers have always been united by the closest ties of sympathy. The fact came out, though I knew it already, in the course of that long conversation on the hillside from which I have made so many digressions. Let me get back to that talk. I had asked my friend to what destiny Luxemburg looked forward, when the war was over ; and the dialogue then ran as follows :

“ We should prefer, of course, if possible, to remain what we are.”

“ I know. It may be possible. In fact, I see no reason why it should not be. But suppose, for the sake of argument, that there must be a change. Suppose you must, for your own protection, be included in some larger political unity ? . . . ”

“ Not in Germany, at any rate. You know how the Prussians treat the Poles, the Danes, the Alsatians. Why should they treat us any differently ? ”

“ In France then ? ”

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

“ That would be more tolerable. The French are sympathetic, and are not always trying to reduce all their citizens to a common standard. We get on very well with them. Still we feel that our national identity would soon be lost in France ; and that is what we want to avoid.”

“ Would the same objection apply to union with Belgium ? ”

“ A little, perhaps, but certainly not to the same extent. We and the Belgians are very good friends; we have much of our history in common. Moreover, Belgium is small, and is already a nation of conglomerates. We resemble the Walloons as much as the Walloons resemble the Flemings. We should not feel that we lost our identity in joining them. We could join on equal terms—terms which would preserve our characteristic institutions. The Germans of Malmédy and Moresnet might be glad to be taken in with us; they are Walloons and speak French.”

“ Then the matter has been discussed ? ”

“ I don't know whether it has been discussed in official circles or not, but some of us have spoken about it among ourselves.”

All the sympathy, it will be observed, was with the vanquished and the persecuted ; there was no desire whatever to swim with the stream, or be strong upon the stronger side. Historical memories, and the odious Prussian character

## DISCUSSING THE FUTURE

alike forbade ; and though it would be too much to expect the Prussians themselves to admit the validity of the latter objection, it is a fact that they have some times perceived the force of the former.

“ Look I will show you something,” said my friend, when we got home.

He brought out an old volume of newspaper cuttings, and pointed to an old leading article taken from the *Kölnische Zeitung* of April 25, 1867. It began with a sentence which reads like a slap in the face to the Pangermanists : “ Luxemburg has never been a German province.” It dealt those same Pangermanists many similar slaps in the face, for which I will refer to readers to an appendix ; and then it concluded with the following striking paragraph :

“ Community of origin is not the only basis on which States repose. The sentiment of a nationality which proceeds from identity of interests and religion, fortified by a recollection of common destinies and common vicissitudes ; that is the true principle. France has no claims upon Luxemburg, and the idea of annexation by the French is repugnant to its people. As Count Bismarck admits, it is hardly more sympathetic towards Germany, and the North German Confederation, having no legal title to make good, could not very well forcibly incorporate the country with Germany. If, then, the Grand Duke were disposed to renounce his

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

sovereignty over Luxemburg, a past of four hundred years, the community of religious ideas, the national will, manifested, in 1830, at the price of the heaviest sacrifices—all these things would suggest that the country should re-enter the system of the Belgian State."

Times have changed since that was written; and the Germans have changed with them, having learnt from their professors that they are, as Professor Lanson put it, "both morally and intellectually the superiors of all other peoples," and therefore entitled to appropriate anything that they may take a fancy to, in virtue of the Higher Law. But the Luxemburgers have not changed in respect either of their distaste for the Prussians or for their sympathy for the Belgians.



## CHAPTER XIV

### VILLAGE STREET GOSSIP

MY Diary, if I had kept a Diary, might, almost any day, have contained the entry: "Went for a walk up the village street." There, if anywhere, one found "the full tide of human existence" rolling; and in the afternoon, at tea-time—which for the average Luxemburger, is beer-time—it rolled up, out of the street, on to the hotel terrace.

The soldiers rolled elsewhere. They often rolled past, in fact, with young women hanging on their arms, and were not ashamed to be seen carrying umbrellas while in uniform; but they rarely climbed the steps to our verandah. A crowd of soldiers would, no doubt, have taken vociferous possession of the place; but when they ventured to come in ones and twos, a sort of something in the atmosphere quickly froze them out. Even the Feldwebel stayed away, except when business brought him. He was rather a shy Feldwebel—the only shy Feldwebel that I ever met; and so he lived a lonely life, and gave the girls few opportunities of setting their caps at him in public places. The rank

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

and fashion of Vianden had the hotel terrace to itself.

Thither came René Engelmann, often with a book which he had borrowed for me from the Diekirch Library, and his brother Oscar. Thither came the retired schoolmaster who was willing to see Luxemburg annexed by England, if that were necessary to prevent its annexation by Prussia, and the Member of Parliament, whom I have mentioned, and the plump little gentleman who trembled lest Vianden should be burnt on the altar of Kultur, and that retired Belgian officer who introduced me to the wonderful strong beer of his native land. He sometimes unfolded the maps of the Belgian General Staff, and lectured on the military situation. "The Prussian army," he said one day, "is the most powerful military instrument that the world has ever seen, and it is now at the *apogée* of its strength"; but he was a sufferer from gout, and I suspected that the secret of his pessimism might be found in twitches of that disorder.

On Sunday afternoons, if it was fine, the tide of existence generally flowed into the hotel garden. "Carriage people" drove in from across the frontier, and the steam tram brought a party of excursionists from Diekirch. It was from the latter that we heard how the Germans had arrested the Diekirch station-master because he was a Socialist, and had

## VILLAGE STREET GOSSIP

brought two little girls, who had been playing childish games with coloured glasses, before a court of military enquiry, on the charge of signalling to the enemy. There was one lady among them who always had a tale of horror to unfold, and rolled her eyes, when unfolding it, in the style of a queen of tragedy.

She was the only person whose report of Belgian atrocities ever made me smile, and that not because I was callous, but because her sense of proportion was so queer. Sawing the air with gesticulations, she heaped horror upon horror's head. She told stories of robbery, rape, and murder ; and then, striking a fresh and special attitude, she came to this :

“ And—will you believe it, sir?—hundreds of the civil servants have had their salaries reduced.”

But that is not my subject. I set out to speak of the village street, and my daily walks therein, and the people I met and talked to.

The first encounter was apt to be with the pro-German chemist ; and him I chiefly remember because, when I went to buy Glauber's Salts, I found him burying his baby. If he had put the savings of a life-time into the funeral, he could not have buried the baby more magnificently. There were priests in gorgeous vestments, and choir-boys in white surplices. The village band

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

was in attendance ; and the chemist himself was in full evening dress. It was a long, long procession, watched by a vast crowd, which wound its way from the pharmacy to the cemetery ; and, every now and again, when the singing stopped, one heard a distant gun.

“ Out there,” one said to oneself, “ they are killing grown men by the thousand, and throwing a little earth over them in the ditches. Here, when an infant dies, so soon that one can almost speak of it as still-born . . . .”

The rest was obvious ; but there seemed to be a sermon of some sort in the incongruity, if only one had paused to think it out.

One passed on, however, and the next point of interest was the house of the veterinary surgeon. He, if he was at home, was apt to be at the window ; and, if he was at the window, he was well worth talking to. His services being in great demand in Prussia as well as Luxemburg, he motored in all directions, and met all sorts and conditions of men, and was often the confidant of their hopes and fears and boasts. Samples of all three could easily be produced ; but the boasts prevailed, more particularly after the fall of Antwerp. Two boasts in particular, uttered by a German Customs House officer, struck one as specially interesting.

“ Now is the time for Zeppelins. We have hundreds of them, and they are all going to

## VILLAGE STREET GOSSIP

London. Then we will see something. Oh, yes, a Zeppelin is worth its weight in gold."

That sounded formidable enough; but the threat of the heavy artillery had a still more formidable ring.

"The forty-two centimetres are nothing. Krupp has a number of seventy-five centimetre howitzers at Essen. We're going to set them up at Calais, and bombard Dover from there."

Why not? The Customs House officer knew of no reason to the contrary, nor did the veterinary surgeon; but an engineer happened to turn up in the course of the evening, and he threw a little light on the subject.

"Theoretically, no doubt," he said, "it is possible to construct a seventy-five centimetre howitzer; but it would be so large and so heavy that it could not possibly be transported to the place from which it was proposed to fire it. It would have to be fired, if at all, from the foundry in which it was made; and when it was fired, the concussion would knock down all the buildings in the neighbourhood."

That was reassuring. One could continue one's walk up the street with a comparatively easy mind, past the hotel in which the Feldwebel enjoyed his *gemüthlichkeit*, to the little bridge which the soldiers were guarding, and the house from the upper window of which the pro-German flew the German flag, and the adjacent tannery,

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

and the shops of the barber, the tobacconist, and the patriotic little old maid, who dealt in fancy needle-work.

The guarding of the bridge, strict enough at first, became very casual as time progressed. I have seen a sentry guarding it from the stoep of a small cabaret, with a huge mug of beer before him; and I am quite sure that anyone who wanted to blow the bridge up could have done so without the slightest difficulty. Its safety lay in the fact that the citizens of Vianden desired its preservation, and were very much afraid that the Prussians would themselves blow it up when the inevitable hour struck for them to run away. They could not do so without simultaneously destroying the picturesque house from the balcony of which Victor Hugo used to exhibit himself to his admirers—a prospect which naturally alarmed the old maid who lived in it. She trembled, not only in her public character as custodian of an historical monument, but in her private capacity as well. Business being slack, she spent most of her spare time in sounding the sentries on the subject; but as I never saw her calm after the possibility had been hinted at, I fear she can have got but little satisfaction from them.

Another establishment threatened by the same danger was the tannery on the opposite bank of the Our; but the tanner, though not indifferent

## VILLAGE STREET GOSSIP

to it, had other things to think of. "It is the chance of my life," he said, "if only I can get some hides"; and he scoured the country for them. Some of the hides which the Germans stole at Antwerp were allotted to him; and then he proceeded to make his fortune. Seeing that the price of leather soon rose to nine marks a pound, he must be a rich man—on paper—by this time, though I think he regarded himself, not as the friend of his customers, but as the spoiler of the Egyptians. Certainly the little café in which he occasionally rested from his labours was a hot-bed which bred contempt for the alleged German victories.

"Fort du Camp des Romains? They didn't win any victory there—they walked into a death-trap. The other forts just ceased fire until they'd settled down, and then opened on them. They must have lost at least 20,000 men there."

That was the kind of talk one heard, in the intervals of tanning, in that centre of conviviality; and the tanner was wreathed in smiles. He was, as they say in the Stock Exchange, "on velvet,"—*in utrumque paratus*, sure of material satisfaction while the Germans got the best of it, and of sentimental satisfaction when they came to grief. My only fear for him is that there will be a change in the spirit of his *Weltanschauung* when he tries to get gold for those Reichsbank

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

notes which he has accumulated in such agreeable abundance ; for then, I fancy, instead of being, as the stockbrokers say, " on velvet," he will be, as the French say, " in the soup." But that is his affair, not mine.

My own business in his neighbourhood was not with him, but, as a rule, with either the barber or the tobacconist. Tobacco was cheap—one got a huge bag of it for half-a-franc ; and cigarette papers were a drug in the market. The Germans despised the use of them as an effeminate French habit ; and I was once solemnly warned that terrible things might befall me if I asked for them at Coblenz ; but the Luxemburgers had no such scruples. Moreover, gossip passed over the counter together with the other goods ; and gossip was also to be picked up while one was being shaved. A good many of the customers had sons-in-law in the German army ; and one gathered that these sons-in-law were no fire eaters, but men who would much have preferred to spend the whole of their time on furlough at Vianden.

" Yes, he went back this morning. It was with a heavy heart that he rejoined his regiment."

So more than one mother spoke ; and the ring of truth was in their accents. These sons-in-law of the small tradespeople of Vianden evidently did not dream of glory, and were not expected to. Fighting from their point of view, was merely a dangerous trade, and one most in-



## VILLAGE STREET GOSSIP

adequately remunerated. It fitted in with the speech of a sage friend of mine in reply to a remark that the German people had enjoyed power and prosperity in consequence of the Prussian military *régime*.

“No doubt,” he said, “but they have not been happy.”

They have not ; and the German views which filtered to me through the barber’s shop were the views which are now beginning to find expression in those Reichstag debates in which Social Democrat orators denounce the grasping greed of the “war-usurers” and the savage cruelty with which officers treat their men and the Government treats the widows and the orphans.

Already, before I left Vianden, the war had made many widows ; and though I read in the papers of widows who bore their loss with patriotic heroism, the widows whom I actually met, or whom my friends met, talked in a very different tone. Their talk, if the ice was broken, was far more apt to be of the Government’s callous indifference to their sufferings, and of the trickery to which it would stoop in order to lure their husbands away from them and deprive them of the pensions to which they were entitled. Very bitter, for instance, was the resentment of the chamber-maid in one of the hotels, when the death of her *fiancé* was announced by the return of her own undelivered letter to

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

him, with the word, "*gefallen*" marked across it with a rubber stamp. And here is a story which I heard from an officer's widow.

The officer in question had been invalided out of the service and given a small post in one of the Customs Houses. When the war broke out, it was intimated to him that he was expected to return to the army as a volunteer. He agreed to do so, and underwent a medical examination, which showed that he had heart disease, and that the least excitement was likely to be fatal to him.

"Never mind," said the military authorities. "We'll give you a soft job. You shall have charge of a railway station; you'll have nothing to do except sit in an office as you are doing now."

The officer rejoined the service on those terms; and all went well as long as the station was quiet. One day, however, sudden movements of troops caused excitement and confusion. Then he ran up a flight of steps, and fell dead of heart failure at the top; whereupon his widow naturally sent in her application for a pension. The claim was met by the production of a doctor's certificate.

"This shows," she was told, "that your husband was a sick man when he rejoined the service. The disease of which he died was not contracted while on duty, but in civil life; and he would have died of it, sooner or later, if he had remained in civil life. It cannot therefore, be argued that his death was, in any way, due to

## VILLAGE STREET GOSSIP

his military activities ; and your demand for a pension cannot be recognised."

Not by such sophistry could one expect woman's enthusiasm for the war to be stimulated ; and it may well be owing to such proceedings that the enthusiasm which some of the German women did evince in the early days is now dying if not actually dead. So far as I can make out, indeed, there is, at the moment of writing, only one German woman who does not want the war to stop ; and her name should certainly be placed on record. She is Fraulein Dr. Kate Schirmacher, the most illustrious of the German Suffragettes ; she thinks that the longer the war lasts, the more good it will do ; and these are her grounds for her opinions :

" We Germans," she writes, " needed to break with a number of bad habits which we had fallen into through our comfort and our enjoyment of life. A long war will accomplish that result for us more thoroughly than a short one. . . . It is a lasting gain for the unity of our people that south and east and west and north should have to join in defending our unity with their blood. Only a long war can thus educate and intensify our sentiments."

So Fraulein Dr. Kate Schirmacher has spoken ; but it is not necessary for an enemy to argue with her. She has met her match in one of her own country women—Frau Ellen Passche. " How is

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

it possible," Frau Passche asks, in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, "that a woman can have so hard a heart? How is it possible that a woman can tell us that we are living so comfortably that only a prolongation of the war can save us? Can it be," she continues, "that Fraulein Dr. Kate Schirmacher has lost no relative, no lover, no friend for whom she weeps? If so, let her thank God; but let her also turn her eyes to the future."

"You wives," she proceeds, "who have given your dearest, you mothers who have lost your only sons, or all your sons, you sisters who will never again see a loyal brother standing by your sides, think of the future. Are we young women who have bright young children playing round us to sacrifice them too in twenty years' time? It must not be. . . . Or are women to bear children merely as food for powder? This also is hard to admit. German women must now bear many children to fill up the gaps that have been made; but not for war—no, for an eternal and blessed peace. And so I say—no half-heartedness! Think of all you may have to lose in twenty years' time . . . and you who have nothing more to lose, because the war has taken everything from you, think of us, and help us younger women, that we may be spared such tears and lamentation in the years to come."

## VILLAGE STREET GOSSIP

But that is a digression, started by some scraps of conversation heard at either the tobacconist's or the barber's ; and I must return from it, and resume the story of my progress up the village street.

## CHAPTER XV

### A CASTLE AND ITS OUBLIETTE

BEFORE one crossed the bridge one took a last look at the house of the pro-German, who flew the German flag. I have already related how he took it down for fear lest the enemy should pelt it with bombs from the sky ; but I should add that his own story was that he wished to preserve it from the rain. That plea did not satisfy the soldiers ; and he had to hang it out again, and sit underneath it, in fear and trembling, on a bench which was placed outside his drawing-room window. As a rule, a couple of soldiers sat with him, keeping him up to the mark, smoking his cigars and drinking his beer. The superstitious noted with satisfaction that the flag made its first appearance on a Friday and was withdrawn on the thirteenth of the month.

Beyond the bridge, as soon as one had passed the tannery, one found the street comparatively deserted. Little children drove fat pigs through it, pretty much as in Switzerland they drive goats ; but that pleasing spectacle belongs to a distant past,—in all the country now in German occupation all the pigs are lean. The shops,

## A CASTLE AND ITS OUBLIETTE

too,—such shops as there were—appeared to be doing very bad business. The dwindling stocks were replenished with difficulty, and there were practically no customers for anything except tobacco, food, and oil. Gossip had practically taken the place of trade ; the men discussing the military situation in the cafés, while the women discussed the economic situation on the door-steps. The purchaser who was prepared to pay cash for as much as a pair of bootlaces was always a welcome guest—doubly welcome if he had anything to add to the common stock of knowledge and opinion. In one small shop which I patronised, the whole family used to be fetched from the bedrooms and the back parlour whenever I entered, in order that I might reassure them as to the prospects of the Allies.

“ Then it is not true that the Prussians are going to take Paris ? Or even Calais ? And the French and English are really going to beat them ? Ah, that is good. How long does Monsieur think that it will take ? Monsieur, being English, will be sure to know.”

Questions of that sort were showered upon me. The Luxemburgers had been bred in the belief that the Prussian Army was invincible ; but it was a belief which they were eager to get rid of. Moreover, in the backs of the brains of even the most ignorant of them, there lurked a vague conception of England as the unknown quantity

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

which might upset the Prussian calculations. They could not but have been impressed by the apparent perfection of the Prussian military machinery ; but I think they also felt that men might in the end be a match for machines, because men can make machines, whereas machines cannot make men. At any rate, I did my best to make them think so before I paid for my purchases and passed on.

It was a steep climb through a street paved with hard cobble stones. One passed the church, in which the *curé* frightened the people, and the old women prayed for peace ; one passed the village square in which I had seen the Grand Duchess receiving the homage of her subjects ; one passed the great house which harboured the the great lady who had made the German's flag ; one passed the laundry ; one came to the cross roads, whence one could diverge to Diekirch, to the Bildchen Chapel, or to that ruined castle which still remains the pride and glory of Vianden.

Big books have been written about that Castle ; and I could easily make another by copying them ; but the end would not justify the means. It is at any rate, so notable an object that Bethmann-Hollweg motored over from Luxemburg to look at it. Presumably his excursion had other purposes except that of sight-seeing ; but he did, at any rate, stop his car, and get out, and pace



## A CASTLE AND ITS OUBLIETTE

slowly up and down the road, keeping a contemplative eye fixed upon the crumbling masonry. Was it Kultur,—the Kultur of the Chancellor who stole the nibs? Or a desire to see whether a modern battery could advantageously be located there? Or merely a Hun's homage to the memory of the Vandal who, in 1820, bought the Castle for £272, and stripped it of its lead-work, and iron-work, and wood-work, which he sold for £1,600? I do not know; I have no means of finding out; I do not care. What I do know is that, if one desired quiet, and a sense of restful aloofness from a world at war, the ruined castle was the place in which one could find it.

Before the war began, indeed, there was no such sensation to be had there. Then tourists streamed, all day long, through the ruins; they were mostly German tourists, and all the world knows what that implies. A German, as all travellers have observed, can never admire any spectacle, even the most sublime, in silence. He must always argue about it, at the top of his voice, with his companions, quarrelling with his dearest friend over the question whether some other spectacle is not superior to it, or whether, granting that it is unique, *prachtvoll* or *herrlich* is the more applicable epithet. The fact that Bethmann-Hollweg, as I have related, admired the view of the Castle in silence is only to be

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

accounted for by the further fact that he was alone save for his chauffeur, with whom he could not condescend to argue. Otherwise—had Von Moltke or Von Tirpitz, for instance, been with him—a true *querelle d'Allemand* would surely have rent the air.

Those German tourists of whom I have spoken did not come alone, and were not silent ; their *querelles d'Allemand* did rend the air,—everybody explaining everything at the top of his voice, and everybody else disputing the exactitude of the explanation. But that phenomenon ceased as suddenly as the sun sets in the tropics. One day there were hundreds of argumentative enthusiasts ; the next day there were none. So the caretaker told me, indicating at the same time, great piles of picture post-cards, and vast stocks of lemonade and ginger-beer which the call to arms had left upon her hands. It was a hot day, so I drank my share, but that made no more impression on the cellar than if one had sipped from the horn of Thor. Then I was shown round, and everything was explained to me ; and after that, I wandered about, unattended.

Perhaps I missed an opportunity. My sojourn at Vianden was of about the length of a term at a public school. If I had cared to put in a term's work on the subject, I might have transformed myself from an ignoramus into a com-

## A CASTLE AND ITS OUBLIETTE

plete archæologist. My landlord had the necessary books, and lent them to me ; but I got no further than looking at the pictures, though I cannot throw the blame for this negligence upon the excitement of the war. Even in times of peace, it never seems to me to matter very much whether the tracery of a particular window belongs to the twelfth or the eleventh century, or whether a particular subterranean chamber was used, in the remote past, as a powder magazine, a chapel, or a kitchen. The experts in these matters seldom give one the impression of living, in peaceful and romantic abstraction, in the past ; too often one sees them consecrate their time to cross-grained bickerings in the present.

That, at all events, is my personal feeling about ruins. They are, for me, things to be felt rather than studied, like forests and swamps ; and I would rather that my imagination, straying freely, led me into impossible errors, than that it were confined in a straight waistcoat by too much technical knowledge. The story of Yolande of Vianden, who made a rope out of her bed-clothes and lowered herself down the crags, at the dead of night, because she wished to join her lover instead of taking the veil, gains nothing from a knowledge of the date at which the window was put in. Nor does one want to be overwhelmed with technical antiquarian details

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

when one is contemplating the machicolations or the oubliette. Such details only obstruct one's vision of the blazing pitch descending from the former upon the heads of the storming party, or of the luckless prisoner lowered out of sight into the latter.

So I shall repeat no such stories, though I have read a good many in the guide-books. They did not impress me very much—partly, perhaps, because the guide-book manner of relation was not impressive; and I was more interested in wondering whether the chapter of such narratives is closed, or whether the present war will add to it. As regards the machicolations, indeed, I look for no fresh developments; they belong to the old days when gates had to be smashed by battering rams, and those days have obviously passed away for ever. As regards the oubliette, however, I am not so sure. It seems to me that the oubliette still has possibilities. The idea occurred to me on the day on which I heard that a German soldier had mysteriously disappeared from Diekirch, and that martial law was to prevail at Diekirch until he was discovered.

This particular soldier was, I believe, eventually found lying drunk and incapable in a ditch; but I could imagine the story having quite a different ending—and one in which the oubliette would have played a part. I was helped to that conclusion when I heard of Bethmann-Hollweg pacing up

## A CASTLE AND ITS OUBLIETTE

and down the road in silent admiration of the Castle. I was helped further to it when I saw how German officers took long and lingering looks at it as they shot past, on military errands, in their motors. Here again, it seemed to me, was one of those themes in which Maupassant would have delighted.

He would not, of course, have made Bethmann-Hollweg the hero of it. That would have been melodramatic and impossible ; and Maupassant was far too true an artist in his *genre* to transcend the limits of the credible. His hero would have been an insignificant officer—harmless and even amiable ; a reserve officer, fetched back, like our Feldwebel, from civil life,—an artist or an architect, perhaps, or at all events, a dilettante of the arts. Such a one, finding himself, with nothing much to do, in the neighbourhood of a famous historical monument, whether in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, or on the lines of communication, in Belgium, would naturally devote an afternoon when he was off duty, to a thorough study of so interesting a sight. Maupassant would have insisted, I think, that he was not one of the ferocious Germans, and that, not being ferocious, he was not suspicious, and believed that his enemies could be disarmed by the transparent sincerity of his interest in the arts. Presumably there are such men, even in Germany ; and, if there are not, the literary artist would not feel

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

that he was doing great violence to his literary conscience in inventing one.

And now picture the mild-mannered antiquary in uniform, rejoicing in his brief respite from military duty, resolved to revel, for an afternoon, in the researches which had always interested him, setting out alone on his excursion, with his sketch-book under his arm, behaving, not merely with correctitude but with affability, determined to do his duty generously in the matter of *pour-boires*, and so ringing the bell, and summoning the caretaker. Imagine, further, that the caretaker who answers his summons is one of those thousands or tens of thousands, of women who have lost husbands, and brothers, and children, in the course of this terrible incursion of the barbarians—at Dinant, or Aerschot, or Termonde, or Louvain! And then try to trace the current of thought in such a woman's mind.

Surprise after surprise would flood it, like a succession of tidal waves. Her first instinctive thought would be that her turn had come, and her first surprise the discovery that it had not; and then would come other shocks of astonishment: astonishment that a Prussian could speak to her politely instead of calling her a pig-dog; astonishment that a Prussian—a Hun, a Boche—could really be interested in any ruins other than those which he himself had made. The novel sensation would melt the surface of her resent-

## A CASTLE AND ITS OUBLIETTE

ment—especially if there were a grandchild trotting after her to whom the visitor gave chocolates. In that melting mood, she would do her duty as guide, showing the stranger round, answering his questions, reciting her explanations. One may even picture her mumbling :

“So they are not all savages? I wonder. There are good and bad everywhere, I suppose ; good and bad with the Germans as with us.”

But it would be only the surface of her anger, after all, that would be melted ; beneath there would still be the hard bed-rock of bitter feeling. When that was reached, she would be angry with herself for having suffered a gentle manner to move her ; and the change in her mood would be reflected in her tone. She would cease smiling, and relapse into sullenness ; and the officer, being the exceptional man I have imagined him to be, would understand, and wish to say something sympathetic, but would say nothing, for fear lest he should say too much, and would content himself with talking archæology and architecture. And so I picture them pursuing their rounds, examining windows, and fire-places, and dining-halls, and guard-rooms, and chapels, and dropping a stone down the covered well, and coming, at last, to the oubliette.

This oubliette, at Vianden, be it observed, is merely a small cavern, or dug-out, underneath one of the Castle courts. The entrance to it—



## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

the only entrance—is like the entrance to a coal-hole from a London street ; a little larger, perhaps, but, in other respects, quite similar. The victim consigned to it could be lowered down, or dropped down—his fate would be the same in either case ; and the hole is covered up so carefully that one walks over it without suspecting its existence. One may suppose that the officer, being an antiquary, has heard of it, and asks to be allowed to look at it. And the woman :

“ The oubliette ? Certainly there is an oubliette. Monsieur desires to see it ? Naturally. It is this way.”

She guides him to it, and uncovers the mouth of the pit. He stands close to it ; he bends over it and peers down into the darkness ; the woman stands back, a little way behind it, and this is the crisis of his fate. Once more one follows the current of her thoughts.

This man has done her no harm, and seems to wish her none ; he has spoken politely, and does not look as if he would be stingy in the matter of *pourboires*. So far so good. But she has suffered cruelly, and she cannot forget ; kind words cannot allay the memories of Dinant, and Aerschot, and Termonde, and Louvain. This very man, courteous and gentle as he seems to be, may have his share in the responsibility for some of them. His uniform, at any rate, is the uniform of those who were responsible for all of them ;



## A CASTLE AND ITS OUBLIETTE

and the mere sight of the uniform suffices to inflame her lurking passions. For she has lost her sons ; and she has not lost them in fair fight—they have been murdered. And so she mutters to herself in some local *patois* of which he would be able to make nothing, even if he listened to it. First of all, it is :

“ Poor fellow ! Poor fellow ! So nicely spoken ! Perhaps he didn't mean it ! Perhaps he's sorry for it. It seems a shame. And yet ——— ”

She has lost her husband and her sons, you see. They have been murdered ; and she is alone in the world, and desperate. And so it is :

“ Ah, well ! One German was as bad as another then ; one German is as good as another now. It is God's will. If it had not been God's will, God would not have sent him to me.”

And then her mind is made up. She runs at him from behind and pushes. She is a feeble old woman, but he is standing on the edge, and a very little push suffices. He staggers and loses his balance ; his foot treads on nothing ; he utters a loud and startled cry, but there is none to help or hear. His body is shot into the hole, as a load of rubbish might be shot from a cart ; and there would be no way out for him, even if his limbs were unbroken when he reached the floor. The old woman covers up the hole again, and rakes the gravel smooth.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

That is the story—a characteristic Maupassant story, as it seems to me—which sprang up in my mind, one afternoon, when we boiled our kettle and drank our tea in one of the sheltered nooks of the Castle. Most assuredly I was not, that day, living in the past, but in a present still more living than that in which the antiquaries bicker about disputed points of archæology ; but I do not think it necessary to apologise for that. Living in the past may have been possible, in war time, in those old days when fighting was only the business of soldiers, and few civilians understood what the trouble was about, and rumours of defeat or victory were almost as hard to come by as the truth, and the rights and wrongs of the quarrels were difficult to disengage. It is not possible now that all the Powers of Darkness have stood up together, and all the civilised world has allied itself to compass their overthrow. And as for the story which I imagined while living in the living present in a battered ruin of the remote Middle Age, there is, I think, this to be said :

It might happen ; it might very easily happen. It may be, indeed, that it actually has happened, and that I have told a true story (though not of Vianden) without knowing it.

Slowly thinking the story out, I strolled back, down the village street, to my hotel, there to consider yet another problem of the living present :

## A CASTLE AND ITS OUBLIETTE

the problem concerning which both the Luxemburg government and the American Ambassador had been approached, of getting away from the unnatural life which I was living at Vianden, and resuming my normal activities in England.

## CHAPTER XVI

### PASSPORTS *v.* ESCORTS

A LETTER received from the American Ambassador was handed round on the terrace, after dinner. Englishmen, it seemed, were not allowed to leave Germany, but Englishwomen were: the nearest American Consul would tell them what to do, and how to do it. The married ladies would not leave their husbands; but the two unmarried ladies who were with us decided to risk the journey, and things went more smoothly with them than they had feared. The Commandant, when they appeared before him, began with the inevitable *es geht nicht*; but ended by telling his Brigade Major to make out the pass. He even went further, melting by degrees, wishing them "a pleasant journey" and "a good welcome home," and promising them that they would encounter "no unpleasantness of any kind." We afterwards heard that they did not, in fact, encounter any, and that though they were searched on the frontier, they were searched politely.

It looked as if the rest of us were fixed at Vianden until the end of the war. That fate would have been tolerable, though tedious, if

## PASSPORTS *v.* ESCORTS

only one could have been quite sure that things would continue to go on as they were going, and could have paid one's bills ; but we could neither pump up the confidence nor procure the money. Herr Ensich was, indeed, a host of boundless hospitality. He never mentioned the bill, and did not like us to mention it ; he said that he would be delighted if we would spend the winter at Vianden. Still, this was a kindness on which one did not like to presume, even if one could have been sure that the end of the winter would have been the end of our embarrassment ; and the rumour reached us that the American Ambassador had exaggerated the difficulties. Therefore, as there was no one else to consult, we decided to consult the Feldwebel.

He was, as I have said, a Feldwebel of the better sort : a Feldwebel from the Rhine provinces, where the character is mellowed by the wine. It was in the evening, at the hour of *gemüthlichkeit*, that we called to consult him ; and he gave us the impression of a man who had never shed blood, or smelt powder, or felt the least temptation to do either of these things. Instead of practising the methods of barbarism, he had, that afternoon, if I am not mistaken, been on a peaceful round of inspection in the society of an agreeable young lady, and was, in consequence, in a friendly frame of mind. At any rate, he expressed no more surprise at being asked to show us the way to England

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

than he might if he had been asked to show us the way to the Post Office; and when we asked him to what authority we should address our application for a pass, he answered: "Why not begin with the Feldwebel at Vianden?"

He really said that in the tone of a man whose feelings would have been hurt if the opportunity of doing us a favour had been snatched from him. The rule, he added, certainly was as the American Ambassador had stated; but he believed that there had been exceptions to it. If we would send him a formal application for a pass, he would make his minutes on it, and hand it on.

*"Mehr kann ich nicht!"*

And then he talked a little on other subjects; literature, and art, and restaurants, and the pity of it was that one's cultivation of the things that mattered had been so violently interrupted; so that we really felt, for the rest of the evening, as if everything were as good as settled.

But it was not; for though we promptly sent in our application, nothing came of it.

Whether that was the Feldwebel's fault or not, I do not know. He may have pigeon-holed the application in his trousers pocket; it may have been thrown into the waste-paper basket by the superior officer to whom he handed it; speculation on that point would be idle. Anyhow we got tired of waiting, and decided to follow the application a little higher up the ladder in person, in

## PASSPORTS *v.* ESCORTS

spite of the risk that the Devil we did not know might turn out to be worse than the Devil we knew. So we proposed to the Feldwebel that we should go to Luxemburg and there put our case before the Commandant. He said that he would ask his Captain whether we might do so ; and in the course of the next day he called at the hotel with his answer :

“ The Captain says that there is no objection to your going to Luxemburg. I will send a soldier with you.”

Being a polite man, he put it as if he were granting a favour ; but he spoke so fast, and disappeared so quickly, with such a queer look in his eyes, that politeness evidently was not the sole motive of his offer. Doubtless he had strict orders to keep a careful eye on us ; and he did so, even to the point of coming to the station to see us into the train. Meanwhile, however, he left us to our packing and our farewells.

It was not a cheerful business. All our friends were quite sure that we were walking into a baited trap ; we ourselves rather suspected that we were doing so, though we pretended to them—and they pretended to us—that there was no cause whatever for anxiety. We tore up many papers ; not because they were incriminating, but because the suspicious Prussian has a habit of seizing and sealing up any scrap of paper which he does not understand from a dinner invitation to a tailor's

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

bill. We arranged for the safe custody of a camera and some books. When everything was done, we had little time for sleeping ; and when I did sleep, I dreamt that the little man who had denounced Deutsche Kultur under the influence of Diekirch beer was really an *agent provocateur*, specially commissioned by the Kaiser to shepherd us all into prison. And so to the station, where we had to wait for the Feldwebel.

He arrived, just as the train was due to start, bringing our passes, and maintaining his politeness to the last. He presented a soldier, who saluted like an orderly ; and he stood back tactfully while we said good-bye to our Luxemburg friends—more particularly to our host and hostess of the Hotel Ensck, who had brought us a parting gift of good things to eat and drink on the journey. Then, when the whistle blew, he stepped forward and offered his hand.

“ *Leben sie lang,*” were my last words to him ; and he laughed a little uneasily.

He was, I felt sure, the sort of man who would like to live as long as possible, even if a special peace had to be concluded to enable him to do so ; but the uneasy laugh had nothing to do with the irony of the salutation addressed to a man of war, who might be summoned, at any moment, to take his chance in the trenches. It must have been due—I fancied so at the time, and now I feel sure of it—to the fact that he was playing a comedy.



## PASSPORTS v. ESCORTS

Beyond question he knew something more than he chose—or than his orders permitted him—to tell ; and I imagine he was wondering what we should think of him when his re-assuring speeches—for he had gone out of his way to make such—were found to be in flagrant conflict with the facts.

Certainly, they were in conflict with them, and I have little doubt that he knew that they would be ; and yet I should like to tell him, if he is still alive, that we did not feel angry with him but sorry for him, as a man cast for a part which did not suit his character. He was not born to hypocrisy, and he had not quite achieved it. It had been thrust upon him, and he had not dared to thrust it back ; that was the meaning of the queer uncomfortable look in his eyes. So with that look in his eyes—a look which I can still see, he passed out of my life, I suppose for ever, though I hope he will survive this war, and return to the family whose portraits he used to carry about with him, and buy a copy of this book. But the last voice was my host's.

“ Mind ! ” he called after us. “ If you don't get your passes, you must come back to us. The room will still be there, and you will still be welcome.”

And this, remember, was an invitation addressed to a foreigner who was almost a stranger, at a time when all the pecuniary communications with England were cut, and no one knew when they

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

would be renewed. The kindness of it shall never be forgotten. We shook hands and the train started.

Trains were few and badly connected ; so there was a long wait at Diekirch junction, where we lunched in the hotel opposite the station. Somehow or other we managed to get rid of our soldier, —I rather fancy he marched, at the enemy's expense, in the direction of the beer ; and then we caught sight of René Engelmann, coming out of the Schoolhouse in which he taught French and English, and beckoned to him to join us for coffee and cigarettes. The talk was gay enough, though the reasons for gaiety were not very obvious. The pretence that we were really on our way to England was well kept up, though I am quite sure that René did not believe that we should ever get there ; he knew the Prussians too well to expect them to miss so good an opportunity of making themselves disagreeable. Still, the fact that we were, to all intents and purposes, under arrest was tacitly ignored, and we finished an unimpeded meal in comfort, albiet under the inquisitive eyes of Prussian officers. Then the clock warned us that it was time to go ; and once again there was cordial shaking of hands, and I little suspected that my next news of René Engelmann, would be the tragic news which I read in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, while sitting on the grand stand which overlooks the Ruhleben race-course. And so to Luxemburg.

## PASSPORTS *v.* ESCORTS

"I do not know," the Feldwebel had said, "what the arrangements will be; but you may be sure that they will be quite simple."

As, in fact, they were, though they did not run quite on the lines which we had expected.

Our idea was that we should be taken, as the ladies who preceded us had been, to the Consul to ask for passports. I had even been permitted to telegraph to the Consul, making an appointment. But that was waste of money, for the enemy had other views.

"I do not know what I have to do with you," said the soldier. "I will telephone to the Commandantur, to find out;" and he set another soldier to watch us while he repaired to the telephone box.

The order came that we were to be taken to the Commandantur to be "inspected"; and we finished our tea, called for cabs and drove there. The soldiers offered us chairs while we were waiting; and presently the Commandant entered.

He was a General of Landsturm—a tall man of sinister aspect, with a nose like a vulture's beak—but he spoke smoothly. One of the party pronounced his manners charming; but that is a testimonial which I do not endorse. Like most Germans, he would have been very nasty if he had been rattled; as it was, he only made it clear that he regarded us as persons of no importance, to be disposed of, like bales of goods.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

“ You wish to go to Coblenz ? ” he asked.

“ To Holland,” we corrected.

“ No, to Coblenz,” he repeated. “ Coblenz is on the way to Holland. I will send you there. But you cannot be allowed to walk about Luxemburg. You must return to your hotel and stay there.”

We were not in a position to contradict the statement that the way to Holland lay through Coblenz ; and we were quite satisfied to spend our last evening in the Grand Duchy in a hotel instead of roaming the streets. But we had no passports. Must we not see the Consul about them ?

“ That is not necessary.”

“ But if we are stopped and questioned ? ”

“ You will not be. I am going to give you an escort.”

Then we were dismissed, and descended the stairs, wondering what to make of it.

“ It seems to go very easily,” said the optimists.

“ It seems to go a great deal too easily,” replied the pessimists ; and it was the pessimists who were right.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE ESCORT SCORES A WIN

OUR escort suddenly appeared from nowhere, like an astral body, or a goblin springing up through a trap-door. He was fat, though not quite indecently so; and he had a face which might have served for a goblin of the better sort. He followed us into the cab, and introduced himself by pointing to a labelled badge suspended from his neck, but hidden, until he pulled it out, by his coat. It showed that his name was Kraft, and that he was a detective.

“Many spies!” he said. “Many spies in Luxemburg! That is why.”

“But——”

“Not you, not you. But many spies all the same! So that is why.”

The idea was presumably that, if we walked abroad, the spies would seek us out, and ask us to carry messages for them. Our guardian's manner seemed to imply that, though he did not say it. Perhaps, too, he wished to prepare us gently for the surprise in store for us when we got to the hotel. Certainly—what with our bad German and

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

his bad English—we had no idea, until we did get there, how severely our movements were to be restricted.

We had looked forward to a comfortable dinner in the public dining-room, and the freedom of the café afterwards ; but the enemy, once again, had other views. There was some bustling and babbling and argument which I did not understand ; but it was finally explained—the landlord protesting and gesticulating—that we were not to be admitted to any of the public rooms, but were to go straight to our bed-rooms and remain in them until the train started on the following morning. Sentries were to be posted at all the doors, to guarantee that we did so.

“ But we haven’t dined,” we objected. “ These aren’t the sort of bed-rooms that one can dine in.”

It was admitted that they were not ; and permission was accorded to us to dine on the first floor landing, with the detective and the sentry closely watching us. So the latter fixed his bayonet with a click, while the former stammered out his excuses to the ladies. He feared that this was not what they were accustomed to ; but war was war, *etc.* Decidedly, he was a goblin of the better sort ; for it cannot have amused him to look on while we ate, and he was working overtime in order to do it. Moreover, the proprietor and the entire *personnel* were glaring at him as if they would have liked to pitch him out of the

## THE ESCORT SCORES A WIN

window, and were showing their opinion of Prussians by extreme deference to us.

“Never mind,” said the former. “You shall be just as well waited on here as if you were in the public rooms.”

And so we were, at very reasonable charges ; the goblin sitting through the business, like a man under fire, while even the waitress indicated her opinion of Prussians by the manner in which she tossed her head. Then thirst overtook the goblin ; and as he could not drink while on duty, he besought us to give him the freedom of the café by going to bed ; and then we received a whispered communication from a messenger who disguised his errand by bringing a jug of hot water.

“I wanted to tell you, Mr. Gribble, that I’ve been round to the British Consul.”

It was a pleasant proof of sympathy ; but of course the British Consul—he was a Luxemburger—could do nothing, and made no sign ; and we went to bed, wondering what the morrow would bring forth.

It brought tempestuous rain, and a long journey, which began at a preposterously early hour. We yawned, and we noticed that the goblin was yawning too. His somnolence, indeed, was such that, if spies had really been trying to communicate with us, they could have done so without difficulty ; and he even thought it necessary to

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

make excuses for his drowsiness. He had, it seemed, been snatched away from his beer and kept up all night in order to investigate the complaint of a *Landsturm* man that a lusty young Luxemburger had bonneted him on sentry-go.

The telling of that story appeared to relieve his conscience. Having told it, he fell asleep, with his mouth open, and snored. He woke up and told us that he was instructed to deliver us "at a place something like Scotland Yard"; and then he fell asleep again. Evidently we were not prisoners whom he took very seriously. There was no attempt to isolate us; and we were the objects of the curiosity rather than the enmity of our fellow-passengers. Two officers, in particular, who dropped in from other compartments, showed what might have been either a friendly interest in our fortunes or a sporting interest in our chances.

One of them, but for his amiability, I should have classed as a Junker of the better sort; as he was amiable, he probably came from the Rhine Provinces. His uniform was so spick and span, and he wore so many medals, that one might have taken him for Solomon in all his glory, or a commissionaire straight from the portal of the Carlton or Harrods' stores. The medals had been won in the campaign against Faidherbe—one of them at Bapaume—in the war of 1870, so that he must have been a man of over sixty; but he



## THE ESCORT SCORES A WIN

carried the weight of his years with an easy swagger.

"*Ich bin Freiwilliger*," he announced proudly ; and he was evidently too well pleased with himself to hate his enemies.

Then he evidently regarded in the spirit of the Irish soldier on the troop-ship, who called for three cheers for Paul Kruger on the ground that "if it wasn't for the old man we shouldn't have any fighting at all." The type is rare in Germany ; but it is said to be met in the Flying Corps, and I certainly encountered this one example of it. Sport was the principal object of the veteran's conversation, though, as German was his only language, it was not to me that he spoke.

The other surprised us by talking English like an Englishman. He seemed rather pleased to meet English people, and his conversation suggested a reason.

"You see, I almost am an Englishman. I've lived in England for the last twenty years. My wife is English, or rather Irish."

He named some of his English friends ; and one could see in what English circles he had moved. "The county"—I forget which county—appeared to have accepted him ; and he also seemed to have been at home in *la haute Bohème*. Among other things, he said :

"Poor old George Edwardes ! I felt awfully

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

sorry for him. He was caught at Bad Nauheim, you know. I do hope he managed to get away in time."

He told us his errand,—he was taking charge of a French prisoner of war of high rank ; and he had not the least objection to talking about the war. He seemed to desire to be frank about it, and also to be impressive. These were some of his *obiter dicta* :

"I've just come from the North of France. It's bloody murder there, all day long."

"Your men have been doing awfully well. They were the hardest of all to shift."

"A regiment of sportsmen ? That sounds all very well, but it won't do. What you want is not sportsmen, but trained men. You sent a lot of untrained men to Antwerp, and you found out your mistake."

"It's a stiff tussle ; but you can't deny that poor old Germany is putting up a pretty good fight against a good many of you."

"One thing is certain, anyhow. We shan't hear much more about Russia. Russia is practically done for."

I wonder whether he remembers, if he is still alive, saying that to an enemy in a railway carriage. The idea certainly was firmly fixed in the minds of most Germans at that time ; and it was always cropping up again after things had happened to disturb it. I came across it,

## THE ESCORT SCORES A WIN

nine months later, at Ruhleben, when a German general came to the Camp to visit his English brother-in-law, who was one of my friends. He talked to him mainly of domestic matters—his chances of being exchanged, and so forth—but finally fired his military shot :

*“ Wir hoffen, in kurzen Zeit, mit Russland fertig zu werden.”*

And now, at the moment of writing, the Austrians are running like rabbits from Lechitsky's Cossacks, and Mackensen is trying in vain to plug the hole at Kovel, and Hindenburg is wondering which is the best road home. It is a strange stroke of irony.

Presently, however, the talk turned to other topics, and we discovered the causes of our companion's sympathy with us. Pleased as he was to be the custodian of a French general, he was infinitely more distressed because his wife was in England—in some difficulty he believed—and he had not been able to find a way of communicating with her.

“ Luckily, I have been able to send her money through the Bank of Amsterdam, but still——”

One understood : the tears came to his eyes and explained for him. A Prussian officer in tears is, I believe, a rare spectacle, and therefore worthy to be recorded. It seemed absurd, if not that there should be a war, at least that he and we should be on opposite sides ; and I cannot

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

believe that he had any hand in the crimes perpetrated in the regions from which he had come. Perhaps he was not a Prussian, but a Saxon. Anyhow, a member of our party who imagined that he was going to Switzerland, offered to convey a message thence for him; and he was overwhelmed with gratitude, and got out a pencil and paper and began to write.

"It's awfully good of you," he said. "I'm half afraid you won't get through, you know; but still—if you do——"

As a matter of fact, the man to whom he was speaking did get through; and I have no doubt that the letter was posted. But that is by the way. Our friend the enemy returned to his own prisoner; and we were left to meditate on the effect of international marriages in softening the asperities of warfare. They have certainly introduced some queer complications; and those complications will hardly cease when the war ends. Some extension of the divorce laws will probably be necessary, in order to ease an intolerable situation, and give some unfortunate Englishwomen a fresh start in life. Even the Bishops cannot very well maintain that it is an act of virtue to kill a German, but a sin to divorce him; but that again is by the way. We had not time to pursue the train of thought very far before the train slowed down and stopped at Coblenz.

There we discovered what had been meant by

## THE ESCORT SCORES A WIN

“ a place something like Scotland Yard.” Our detective explained that he was charged to deliver us at the Coblenz Police Station and there obtain a receipt for us from the Kommissar ; but he added that there was no hurry, and that, if we liked to lunch first at the railway station refreshment-room we might do so. Probably he said that with an eye to the satisfaction of his own hunger and thirst ; but the permission was none the less welcome. So we gave our orders, and ate what, for anything that we knew to the contrary, might be our last square meal before we were cast into a dungeon.

Happily, however, things were not to be quite so bad as that, and our path, though not as smooth as we had hoped, was not as rough as we had feared. It was the Kommissar’s turn to speak ; and he told us that we should have to remain in Coblenz for a week or ten days while enquiries were being pursued as to the reasons for our presence at Vianden. He added, however, that, as we were not the objects of any specific suspicion, we could live at liberty, and lodge in whichever of the Coblenz hotels we preferred, and that he could particularly recommend the Hotel Bahnhof, where the cooking was good—he knew it, for he lunched there regularly—and the prices were extremely moderate. He even offered to send one of his men with us to smooth our course, and explain things to the proprietor.

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

All this, as we eventually learnt, was a part of a trick, though the trick was not of the Kommissar's devising,—he was merely the mouth-piece through which the will of superior authorities was conveyed to us. There had never been any mystery about our presence at Vianden. The Wachtmeister had reported it, and the Feldwebel had reported it ; our letters had been opened ; everything ascertainable about us had been ascertained ; any point which still remained doubtful could have been cleared up, in the course of an hour or so, by telegraph. But if we were in a hurry, the enemy was not. Internment was in the air ; the date for it was fixed. The enemy meant all British subjects then in Germany to remain there until November 6th, when they would see what they would see.

Nobody told us what was impending, though some of the British residents in Coblenz either knew or guessed. One of them, as he afterwards informed me, prepared for the emergency by getting his hair cut and taking a Turkish bath. The tourists, knowing themselves to have passed the age at which men can be called upon for military service, lived in hope. At the worst, they expected to be detained, for some time, in Coblenz ; and one party made provisional arrangements for boarding there with a German family. A great deal of time was spent in calling at the Commandantur, waiting on the staircase, and

## THE ESCORT SCORES A WIN

finally achieving an inconclusive interview with a military understrapper. We had been assured that the Commandant himself was one of those obliging people who will willingly do anything for anybody ; so perhaps it was because he knew his weakness that he kept out of our way.

Anyhow, he did keep out of our way, and left us to our uncertainties. Those uncertainties lasted for ten days, and then came to a sudden end. There was a formidable knock at the door : such a knock as the boots gives when he has to earn a special tip by making sure that a drowsy traveller catches an early train. There entered one of the Kommissar's plain clothes satellites who announced that I was wanted at the police station. I accompanied him and learnt my fate from the Kommissar himself :

" The order has arrived to arrest all male British subjects over the age of seventeen and under the age of fifty-five, and all British officers of either service of whatever age, including those on the retired list."

What our ultimate destination was to be he did not then tell us : but I think the evening paper contained the news. In any case we soon learnt that we were to be sent to Ruhleben, to live in stables. How we were conveyed there, and what happened to us when we got there,—these are matters to be related separately in my Ruhleben Book.

## APPENDIX A.

*Article II. of the Treaty of London of May 11th, 1867, guaranteeing the neutrality of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg.*

“ The Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, within the territorial limits settled by the Act annexed to the treaty of April 19th, 1839, under the guarantee of the Courts of France, Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia, shall constitute henceforward a State perpetually neutral. It shall be obliged to observe this same neutrality towards all the other States. The high contracting parties undertake to respect the principle of neutrality stipulated by the present Article. This last is, and remains, placed under the collective guarantee of the signatory Powers of the present Treaty, with the exception of Belgium which is itself a neutral State.



## APPENDIX B.

*Bismarck's Declaration to the North German Diet in the sitting of September 27th, 1867.*

In exchange for the fortress of Luxemburg, we have obtained a compensation which consists in the neutralisation of the country, and a guarantee which will be observed—I am convinced of that in spite of all quibbles—on the day of the supreme settlement of accounts. From the military point of view, this guarantee completely compensates us for the renunciation or our right of occupation.”

## APPENDIX C.

*Convention V. of the Hague, Articles 1 and 2.*

“ The territory of neutral Powers is inviolable. It is forbidden to belligerents to send across the territory of a neutral Power either troops or convoys, whether of ammunition or food supply.

## APPENDIX D.

*Telegram addressed by M. Eyschen, President of the Luxemburg Government, to M. Davignon, Belgian Foreign Minister.*

“I have the honour of making Your Excellency acquainted with the following facts. Early in the morning of Sunday, August 2nd, the German troops, according to information which the Grand Ducal Government has just received, entered the territory of Luxemburg by the Wasserbillig and Remich bridges, and proceeded towards the south of the country, and the City of Luxemburg, the capital of the Grand Duchy. A certain number of armoured trains, carrying troops and munitions of war, have been sent by the railway line from Wasserbillig to Luxemburg, where we expect to see them arrive at any moment. These facts imply actions contrary to the neutrality of the Grand Duchy, guaranteed by the Treaty of London of 1867. The Luxemburg Government has not neglected to lodge an emphatic protest against this aggression with the Luxemburg representative of His Majesty, the German Emperor. The same protest will be telegraphed to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at Berlin.”

## APPENDIX E.

*Extracts from the "Kolnische Zeitung" of April 25th, 1867.*

"Luxemburg, as its semi-official historian proclaimed in 1867, has never been a German province. Constituting an integral part of the Low Countries, it did not share the interests and was not involved in the destinies of Germany. Its inclusion, in 1815, or rather, in 1839, in the German Confederation does not imply that it then became a German province, any more than the admission to the Confederation of the Dutch Province of Limburg and the Austro-Italian City of Trieste, caused them to become fractions of Germany.

"The feudal suzerainty exercised in ancient times by Germany is also irrelevant. This suzerainty extended over a great part of Italy, over Switzerland, over the kingdom of Arles, and over almost all the Provinces of Holland and Belgium. But, for all that, Germany would have no more right to claim one of those countries on the ground that it had formerly been a German

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

province than France would have to claim Flanders.

“ The elevation of Count Henri to the imperial dignity has been wrongly regarded as a proof of the German nationality of Luxemburg. The Law of the Empire did not require the sovereign to be chosen solely from among German princes. Only a few years previously the imperial crown had been bestowed upon King Alfonso of Castile and Prince Richard of Cornwall. The motive of Henry’s election should be sought rather in the fact that his domain was a small one.

“ Nor is the prevalence of the German language among the inhabitants of Luxemburg decisive. The inhabitants of Eastern Switzerland also exclusively speak German. No one has yet considered himself entitled to infer from this circumstance the existence of German rights over the country.

“ Community of origin is not the only basis upon which States are built. The sentiment of nationality derived from identity of interests and religion, and fortified by memories of the same destiny and the same vicissitudes: that is the true principle. France can lay no claim to Luxemburg, and the idea of annexation to France is repugnant to the population. But, as Count Bismarck himself admits, Luxemburg is equally unsympathetic towards Germany; and the North German Confederation, having no legal

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

title to the country, could not very well incorporate it by violence. If, therefore, the Grand Duke were disposed to renounce his sovereignty over Luxemburg, a past of four centuries, the community of religious ideas, the will of the people, manifested, at the price of the most severe sacrifices, in 1830, would recommend the re-union of the country with the system of the Belgian State."

## APPENDIX F.

*Report, taken from the Norddeutscher Allgemeine Zeitung, of the Debate, in the Reichstag, on the German Budget, on April 29th, 1913 :*

“ A member of the Social Democrat party said : ‘ In Belgium they regard the approach of a Franco-German war with apprehension, for they fear that Germany will not respect Belgian neutrality.’

“ Herr von Jagow, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, replied : ‘ The neutrality of Belgium is settled by International Conventions, and Germany is determined to respect those Conventions.’

“ This declaration did not satisfy any other member of the Social Democrat Party. Herr von Jagow said that he had nothing to add to his perfectly clear exposition of Belgo-German relations.

“ To further interrogations of a member of the Social Democrat Party, Herr von Heeringen, Minister of War, replied : ‘ Belgium plays no part in the justification of the German plans

## IN LUXEMBURG IN WAR TIME

of military organisation; that justification is to be sought in the situation in the East. Germany will not forget that Belgian neutrality is guaranteed by international treaties.'

"A member of the Progressive Party having again spoken of Belgium, Herr von Jagow repeated that his declaration concerning Belgium was sufficiently clear."



## APPENDIX G.

*Extract from the German Chancellor's Speech in the Reichstag on August 4th, 1914.*

"I will tell you the truth. We are under the stress of necessity, and necessity knows no law.

"Our troops have occupied Luxemburg, and have perhaps already entered Belgian territory.

"That is contrary to international law. The French Government had, it is true, declared at Brussels, that it would respect the neutrality of Belgium as long as that neutrality was respected by its opponents. We knew, however, that France was prepared for aggression. France could wait, and we could not. A French attack on our flank in the Lower Rhine, might have been fatal to us. Consequently we have been obliged to ignore the justifiable protests of Luxemburg and the Belgian Government. We will compensate them for the wrong which we have thus done them, as soon as we have attained our military objects.

"When one is threatened as we are, and is fighting for all that one holds most sacred, one can consider one thing only: how to hack one's way through at any cost.

"I repeat the Emperor's words: 'It is with a pure conscience that Germany sets out for the fray.' "

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